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**PRE-INDEPENDENCE INDIAN ENGLISH AND GUJARATI  
SHORT STORY:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

**Dissertation Submitted to  
Saurashtra University, Rajkot  
For the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

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2008

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the work embodied in this thesis entitled **Pre-Independence Gujarati and Indian English Short Story: A Comparative Study** has been carried out by Ravesinh B. Zala, under my direct guidance and supervision. I declare that the work done and presented in this thesis is original and independent.

I further declare that the work has not been submitted either partly or fully to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree.

Date:

Place: Rajkot

Signature of the Guide

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the research work presented in this thesis is prepared by me after studying the various references related to the thesis. The analysis and the critical interpretation found in this thesis are entirely original. Hence I declare that I am responsible for the critical opinion and the other details found in this thesis.

I further declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any university or Institute for the award of any degree.

Date:

Place: Rajkot

Signature of the Candidate

Ravesinh B. Zala

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

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The short story is the latest literary form to evolve and yet it is the most impenetrable for the critics and the practitioners with regard to its precise elements, development, structure, techniques, regionalism, abundance influence, and relation with the age old traditions. Today it is the most practiced and published form with the largest readership yet it remains the least discussed and a highly neglected to be taken seriously as a major literary genre. The present study does not intend to go in to the oft discussed aspect of its connection to the age-old oral story telling tradition to draw the trait from epics, fables, legends, narratives, romance, novel, etc.; or to ascertain it as a modern distinct literary form that evolved in the last two centuries all over the globe.

These issues are to an extent addressed by almost every critic by assigning the origins or genesis of the short story as back as 'the beginning of things' i.e. the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Puranas*, *Panchtantra*, *Kathasaritsagar*, *Jatak Katha*, *Ramayan*, *Mahabarat*, legends, folk narratives in case of India. M.K.Naik refers to the age old narrative tradition as:

The western critics naturally went back to the source texts as *The Genesis*, Greek epics, Aesop's Fables, Biblical tales, Chaucer or Arthurian legends that influenced the writers in their tradition. As Thetreau Paul begins his introduction as:

While storytelling is as old as man himself, the short story, as an art form, is of relatively recent vintage for a long time, the short story papered only as either an illustration of a moral lesson (as in fables or parables from the new testament) or as one incident in a long adventurous account of the deeds and exploit of some heroic figure (as in *The Iliad*, *The Song of Ronald*, or the Arthurian Legends). During these early times, other forms of literature, drama, poetry and prose nonfiction, were being wildly used and the major literary productions of the Western Man appeared in these forms until about the nineteenth century. (Thetreau 1)

The above quotes draw our attention to two major issues pertaining to the origin of the short story form and the reception of the form as an individual modern form and its long neglect against the major literary productions to be marginalized by the critics, writers as well as the readers as a non serious work of art.

The attempt to study the development and experimentation in the growth of short story will in itself be an endeavor to bring the form in the mainstream canonical field and attempt to study the form with seriousness to not as the form that emerged as an attempt that communicated the way of life as any other form. Venugopal, discussing the origins, stresses on this aspect with regards to its neglect:

When Indian short story writer in English took to the form not so much because he was interested in it as a literary form as because he knew that all forms it was the simplest and the most popular means of communicating a way of life; and he was interested in conveying, in a language understood by many, inside as well as outside India which he had understood and for which he had proper perspective. (Venugopal 1)

Comparative study in its early phase was more of bi-lingual a study to mark the influence and similarity in two or more languages. Later it branched out to study literary history, cultural specificity, translations as well as feminist, nativist and marginalised voices that include dalit literature in case of India. The present attempt is to study the developments in case of Indian comparative literatures. Within which the short story as a marginalized form with a focus on socio-political and cultural aspects of the times of its early development and

the reflection of the same in the works by major writers of the marginal forms. The approach of the writers, readers, critics and the publishers will also be part of the study.

The core issue of attempting a comparative study of Indian English literature and literature from one of the Indian languages will also be addressed in the light of comparative literary studies. The study will attend to many a questions as to how relevant would such a study be? And, also recently asked question on the relevance of comparative literature in the age of specialization and particularly the distinct identity of Indian comparative literature if any.

Sisir Kumar Das gives a historic perspective of comparative literature in India with the idea of Indian literature mooted by Sarojini Naidu's presidential address at the first "All India Writers Conference" organized by the Indian PEN in 1945 remarks, "... India is one and indivisible. While her children speak with many tongues, they can only speak with one individual heart." (Das, 2001, 246) Sisir Kumar in the same article ends with the conviction about the methodology that comparative literature provides and its future in India to justify how a study as this that limits itself to Indian literature will serve the cause to study literature in its true nature:

The western scholars of comparative literature have made major European literatures as the area of their study even when they are aware of the existence of many great literatures outside the western world. Eurocentricism may not be the only explanation for it. It is the question of feasibility, a question of the limits of human competence. Comparative literature does provide methodology, a wider perspective and a more catholic attitude to study several literatures within a geographical limit or literature bound by certain cultural affinities. It is not necessarily because of political or cultural isolationism. He is free to make European or African literatures or Asian literatures a part of his scholarly universe provided he has the competence and the facilities, *Indian literature provide the natural basis of comparative study*. Comparative Indian literature is not merely a search for the national literature counteracting literary chauvinism nor is it a search for universal literature which is the professed aim of comparative literature. What is more, comparative literature is not an exercise in discovering abstract universals of literature. It must deal with literatures in their correctness and hence *the study of Indian literatures together is part of the comparative literature*. ...The future of comparative literature in this country will naturally be directed towards the study of various Indian literatures in the main, but as long as it realizes that its

texts and context is Indian, its methodology comparative, but its main subject is literature, it will serve the cause of comparative literature. (S. Das 247)

The attempt at comparative study of emergence and growth of written modern short story form in Indian English and Gujarati literature will limit itself to the developments in the last two centuries with the inherited oral narrative tradition that shape and contribute to the form in India. The study will avail an opportunity to review the factors that helped in emergence and growth of short story at pan Indian as well as local sphere with Gujarat as the locale, the western region, within the larger sphere of spacio-temporal homogeneity that shares the religious, ideological, national, cultural, social, political, economical, and above all literary.

The comparative study in the area would add to the larger field of comparative endeavors in Indian Literatures at regional levels contributing also to genesis of genre. The study will primarily assess and examine the preparatory period before the emergence of the short story, the formative stage in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and decade wise study of the development of short story form which is more or less identical an case of all the Indian languages.

Along with the above stated chronological developments major writers and their contribution will be studied in detail to mark the development from macro to micro and vice versa. A study such as this has always been the core area in the Comparative Literature as well as that of Indian Literatures. English is no more a foreign language after being acquired and transformed to Indian English by its wide spread usage from administration to creative writing.

The comparative study of short story with the national and the regional geographical specificity will also lead to the study of local colour and its thread to the national identity to transcend the so called diversity and lead to the aspects that are unifying with respect to the Indian culture or way of life.

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## CHAPTER II

### PRE-INDEPENDENCE INDIAN ENGLISH SHORT STORY

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#### THE BEGINNING

The Indian English short story is just a century old, and so is the case of its history as the modern literary form to evolve and establish in the nineteenth century. The pertinent issues that we come across initially is the English language which was not the product of the Indian soil and the Indian writers sensibility to translate the Indian sensibility and scene in the foreign language that was to be mastered and made its own. The development of the form is in a way a process of transformation of English from a foreign tongue to Indian English. The other issue is related to the growth of short story in all the Indian languages and that is the western form to be adapted to present the Indian life with a rich story telling tradition that the writers inherited. As M.K.Naik in his introduction to the *Indian English Short Story: A Representative Anthology*, gives the account of the earliest short story collections by Indian writers. He comments:

The Indian-English short story is slightly less than a hundred years old. The earliest short story collections by Indian authors appeared in London in 1885:

*Realities of Indian Life: Stories Collected from the Criminal Reports of India* by Shoshee

Chander Dutt and Sourindra Mohan Tagore. Apart from P.V.Rajmaswami Raju who published two collections – *the tales from Sixty Mandarins* (London, 1886) and *Indian Fablea* ( London, 1887). There are only two short story writers with a collection each to their credit, until the tern of the century: Khetarpal Chakravati's *Sarla and Hingana Tales Descriptive of Indian Christian life* (Calcutta,1895) and Kamala Sattinadhan's *Stories from Indian Life* (Madras,1898). B.R.Rajam Iyar's 'Miscellenious Stories' which appeared in *The Prabuddha Bharata* during 1896-98 are included in *The Rambles in the Vedanta* (1905). They are mostly a retelling of mythological and allegorical tales. (Naik 12)

At the drawn of the twentieth century Cornilia Sorabji ... a convert Parsi, educated in Britain (1866 – 1954). With her four short story collections of short fiction. *Love and Life Behind Purdah* (1901) contains exquisitely crafted twelve stories. The short stories are interesting and suggestive of Sorabji's aim to highlight the state of her country women to he readers who were mainly foreigners. It fictionalizes the contemporary Indian Women's physical, emotional and intellectual growth. Her concerns are limited to Hindu and Parsi women Sorabji India calls folk a study their manners and customs at close quarters, in her professional life as India's first Woman barrister. As expected from the forerunners it was experimentation with form. Sorabji narrative primarily contain considerable amount of socio-realism with the issues of women that

figures prominently in socio-religious reformist discourse in the nineteenth century. (All the short stories employ dialogue to a great extent) In 'A living sacrifice', Tani's accidental burning her hand exposes the terror of would-be Sati defying Sati hood or, plight of a barren wife Martha Shri's visit to Kamala's Kum kum party in Greater Love; the sacrifice scene in 'Love and Death' or the orthodoxy of Zoroastrian faith with Bharucha's view in 'The Fire is Quenched!—A sketch in Indian Ink'. Sorabji's short stories mars reader's interest with her purpose to align with the British by sharing with them their own prejudices against India and Indians as foolish, heathen and uncivilized, in desperate need of 'civilized' western reform. She passes, directly or indirectly, the moral judgement on her characters. In, 'Love and Life', her prejudice regarding Hindu husbands and marital relationship is evident. 'Behind the Purdah' the title story deals with the corrupt and royal Zanana of Balsingh Rao.

This is the third phase of Anglo—Anglian literature if we go by Dr. K.R.S Iyengar where 1900 – 1920 is the Era of Political Awakening – The Age of Literary Awakening. The preceding two phases of the Beginnings- Age of the Great Pioneers ( 1820-1870) and the Renaissance in the spirit – The Age of Literary awakening ( 1870- 1900) can be marked with the emergence of all most all the western literary forms in India. The writers of the times experimented

with criticism biographies, autobiographies, drama, poetry, travel books, with their direct contact with the Western literature, thought, education and culture. The Short Story was the last to evolve; beginning with translations of the short stories by Western masters as well as Tagore, along with their in built age old traditions of folk tales, fables, found translation in a new medium and form from oral to written. It was like celebrating and documentation of the local traditional treasures. If we mark the majority of output of short stories are the tales retold by their very titles as *Tales from Indian History*, *Indian Fables stories of Indian Christian Life*, *Rambles* Which also extends to the turn of the century with Cornelia Sorabji's retelling of *Indian tales of Great Ones*, *Among Men*, *Women and Bird People* ( 1918) S.M Nalesa Sastri's *Indian Folk Tales*, (1908) Dwijendra Nath Neogi's *Sacred Tales of India* (1916) A Madhaviah's *by Kusika* (1916) and Sunity Devi's *Bengal Decoits and Tigers* (1916) *The Beautiful Mangal princess* (1918) and *The Rajput princess* ( n.d.)

These early writers, though they have little genuine merit, were occupied by a zest to transform and mould their popular tales and characters in new medium through Short Story form, along with a few attempts that were primarily anecdotal and didactic but could be accounted as a step ahead in creativity with realistic characters and social background, it was invariably reformist in nature to draw the attention of the educated Indians on social evils

prevalent at the time. The second half of the nineteenth century, regarded as the reformist age, influences the first half of the twentieth century and in all wakes of Indian life; which was awakened by the great seers, thinkers and reformers. It was not easy to shake off this didacticism and sentimentalism for the creative writers for a long period of the first four decades in pre-Independence India.

The maturity of Short Story can be traced with the entry of Gandhi on the Indian political and social literary scene (1920 – 47), as E.V Ramakrishna in his introduction to 'Fictionalising India in Indian short stories' marks the influence of Gandhi as:

The first few decades of this century were the formative years of the Indian short story. They coincided with the most turbulent years in the history of India in the present century. Mahatma Gandhi's entry in to the field of the freedom struggle galvanized the Indian society as a whole to an unprecedented level of social action. His use of metaphors and symbols drawn from the common life of India in his anti-colonial struggle ignited popular imagination and ensured widespread participation in mass struggle. He spoke in the idiom of the people and identified with their plight. All this contributed to new aesthetic which brought the folk and the masses within the purview of literature. The short story in Indian languages written in the first decades of the century captures the tenor and tempore of a nation in ferment. (XVI)

So does M.K. Naik state the shift and development of Indian English Short Story as: 'Like the novel, the Indian English short story came into its own during the Gandhian age. The most notable contribution here is by the leading novelists, though there are also writers who devoted exclusively to this form. (176)

The notable early Short Story writers of the third decade were mainly from south India, and if looked at in continuity to the forerunners their contribution can not be accounted as consolidating one, until publication of Mulk Raj Anands. *The Lost Child and other stories* (1934). T.L. Natesan writing under the pen- name Shankar Ram wrote two collections, *The children of kaveri* (1926) and *Creatures All* (1933). Most of the Short Stories are simple in art and sentimental and didactic. Shankar Ram relies heavily on incidents which drag the characters to a point of non- existence. The title like 'The Rajah's Last Hunt' or 'When Punishment is a Boon' are examples of his naïve stories which could not develop more than an animal story or didacticism as in case of 'Blood is Thicker than Water'. Or 'The Coracle Punter' with the issue of superstition of Great Sacrifice to Karuppana the daily before launching the boats, where old Pichar compensated his life for the loss, of the sacrifice. But Shankar Ram is successful to recreate the rustic environment and his device of translating the rustic

nicknames such as Barrel-nose Grandpa and Spider-leg is effectively used by the kgenerations of writers to follow.

A.S.P Ayyar the novelist and playwright contributed three collection of Short Stories *Indian After- Dinner stories* (1927), *Sense in sex and Other Stories* and *The Finger of Destiny and Other Stories* (1932) along with two collections of retold Indian Legends *Tales of India* (1944) and *Famous Tales of India* (1954). Like Shankar Ram he too is often didactic. Majority of his themes are concerned with social reforms e.g. 'Slaves of custom' discusses the problem of dowry, unmatched marriage and widowhood teenaged Dharambal married to rich fifth five year old Sankaranarayan who had ten children, and' many of them were older than herself'. As in his plays the Hindu Women characters aid to discuss the social evils.

S.K. Chettur, in *Indian Civil Service*, introduces a sophisticated narrative technique that can probe the characters psyche. His stories are reminiscent of his official tours and bring out his fascination for fantasy and supernatural world His Short Story collections are *Muffled Drums and Other Stories* (1917), *The Cobras of Dharmashevi and other Stories* (1957) and *Mango Seed and Other Stories* (1974). He experiments with style by adopting various narrative techniques such as autobiographical, third person narration, observer-narrator as well as the

epistolary method. He uses language comprehensively to restrict his stories to the minimum length. 'Disharmony' in *The Cobras of Dharmadevi & Other Stories*, he employs repetition of the opening line 'Life is jagged, rough and uneven with gaping fissures....' It provides an atmosphere and structure to a very short story that runs for just eleven paragraphs without employing dialogue, and is able to end briefly with the character of young Assistant Collector that finds mention in the end, A seeming indifferent young man for the mother and young widow of a would have been collector who takes another way to his office not to disturb the neighbour who see him as a son and a husband as he passed by their house. The writer ends the story pragmatically not falling to any dramatic conclusion that the specified. The detail description of Ramlinga Ayyar being proud of his young intelligent lad, Srinivasan and his vulnerable physic and death of the son before four months of examination all go into the back drop and there emerges the unnamed mother, young widow and the young Assistant Collector who become memorable. His stories are as N.K.Naik puts it as 'He is a raconteur and he is far more sophisticated – especially in his later work than that of Shankar Ram and Ayyar'(1994,18) His former collections are good examples of development of narrative technique. S.K. Chettur's brother, G.K.Chettur has a maiden collection, *The Ghost city and Other Stories* (19320) which is anecdotal an exercise. Two other writers with single collections are, K.S Venkatramani's *Jatadharan* (1937)



and K.Nagarajan's *Cold Rice* (1945). Both the writers have the Gandhian movement at the back drop. Venkataramani in his preface to his *Jatadharan* calls his works as 'Sketches rather than short stories' and admits that he finds himself developing a didactic trail unconsciously. Nagarajan a government pleader draws from his experience as a lawyer taking up a case study. in 'Non-Cooperation' a story among his collection of twelve stories, he juxtaposes the civil officer and the police officer, where he puts the case firm by introducing the out come of misadministration of the officer, into a bad joke. Deployment of the two officers in the same district through a well built argument 'an accident, or, who knows, why not fate? The title 'Non-cooperation' is suggestive of the implications of Gandhian movement on individuals and Indian life as well as its effects on the British bureaucracy.

In Venkataramani and Nagarajans the Gandhian social reform surface through characters, themes, language and background. Education, adult education by the young educated, is filled with reverence for Gandhi. Economical and social problems as in 'The Bride waits' or the under current that the story 'Non-cooperation' gets with a minor character like Jalamuri Jalpeswara Pantulu, a Ramdrug newspaper man of not much concern for the police office who neglects him as 'A good-humoured fellow with just a monkey tricks or two',

but the same leader captures the attention of the readers, and anxiety far Brocklehurst the magistrate as there is a news of volunteers were to gather on seashore making salt in wake of Gandhi's historical salt march, popularly known as *Dandi Kutch*, to Dandi in Gujarat.

Also the prevailing national sentiments with agitated back ground is brought alive, by incidents of lathi-charge, riots, deployment of reserve forces, and the reports of Tamil daily *Prajamitram*. 'The Watched Plot', 'Case of martyrdom', 'A painful Interview' or 'A sermon in Marble' bring fore the snobbery of educated and working class. His Short Stories end happily keeping with the Indian folk tradition. His realistic characters and situations are noteworthy towards the development of the Short Story form.

The reflection of the true spirit of the nation coming to its own after the phases of first national freedom movement-1857, reform, revival, discourses by intellectuals, spread of nationalistic spirit due to the success of movement against Bangbhang (division of Bengal), Swadeshi movement, slogan of *Vande Mataram* and the most influential leader of the epoch Gandhi who kindled the minds of the masses with his Indianised physical and mental make up through simplicity, truth and non violence are best captured in the three major novelist of this period Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao. Technically their short stories are

far superior to any thing produced by our other early writers. The distinction of these writers is due to their craftsmanship, which has a wide readership in India and abroad and mark a significant impact on the practitioners of short stories in terms of technique. Venugopal marks:

The Indian situation, studied through characters and their destinies, is normally delineated in a simple, straight-forward narration. The man and woman help the scene to come to life not only through the peculiar idiom evolved for the purpose by Raja Rao, but in the writings of Narayan who achieves it by his minute attention to details- of expression, of gesture, of habiliment. Occasionally, as Raja Rao does in 'Khandesh', or Anand in 'Lullaby, or Narayan in 'Uncle's Letter', the Indian short story writer in English has taken recourse to certain modern western techniques. It is the direct method of clear narration, however, which has found favour with him. (114)

The most noteworthy breakthrough that the Indian writer in English has achieved is perhaps in the language of narration of his short story where he has evolved fairly successful an idiom that can communicate the Indian scene fully and faithfully. The need for such an idiom was felt by early our writers too, who felt tied down by the idiom of the accepted Standard English which was woefully inadequate in communicating the typical Indian scene. It was however left to later writers like Raja Rao and Anand to go in such a way that as to arrive

at an idiom that which totally translated Indian gestures thought and expressions; the newly evolved idiom, while conforming to the expected norms of grammar and syntax, was yet different from the English idiom, and transmitted the Indian atmosphere perfectly fairly, frequently, and convincingly throughout. Their contribution is copious and substantial which range from the 30s to 70s decade.

### **Mulk Raj Anand**

Mulk Raj Anand was the earliest among the trio R.K.Nrayan and Raja Rao, with *The Lost child and other stories* (1934) with six more collections. *The Berbers trade Union and other stories* (1934); *The tractor and Corn Goddess and other stories* (1947); *Reflections on the Golden Bed and other stories* (1953); *The Power of Darkness and other stories* (1959); *Lajwanti and other stories* (1966)' and *Between Tears and Laughter* (1973). Anand's short stories conceived with sympathy and genuine feelings to bring fore the humanist in the author in mood, tone, local, characters form and style is remarkable. The result is that of the rich and varied human picture of the Indian scene .He attains the tragic intensity rarely found in any other Indian English writer. In 'Birth' or 'Lajwanti' he moves the readers with the misery of the women character with the intensity of narration of their helpfulness 'Birth', 'The Cobbler and the Machine', and 'The Lost Child' are among the best e.g. of

his short stories. A humanist at heart very boldly demonstrates the concerns for the down trodden and marginalised in the complex inhuman forces in his age. Though with a bent of a communist he uses, fable, parables and folk-tale forms, that makes his works lucid which his lyrical, satirical and light-hearted style. As in the title story 'Barbers Trade Union' the social structure is unfolded with the comic. The inter-dependability of classes where social class divide, artisans status, and the inevitable clash between trading in changing times are all in one brought to light as the case in 'Birth', a peasant woman in her advance stage of pregnancy on her way to work, is in her labour pain as (is forced by her poverty to labour at braking stones) The simple peasant woman with utmost faith sees Goddess Kali in the sky above. She manages the midwifery herself and is back to her work. As is the case with Lajwanti, who is rejected by her fathering order to save the honour of the family. 'The power of Darkness' and 'The Tractor and the Corn Goddess', he is at his best in satirizing the decadence in the society, its customs, poverty, education, beliefs, structure, practices, static nature, and helplessness of the people in inhuman situations.

Anand's inspiration, aim and method are well expressed in his prefaces to his collection *Indian Fairy Tales* as a self analysis of his wide- ranging short stories. He observes as stated by Naik:

I fancied that only by going back to these stories, told by mother to son, and son to son, could we evolve a new pattern for the contemporary short story. Of course the modern short story is a highly developed folk tale, if it is a folk tale at all. But the revival of the short story form, like the present seemed a fit occasion to relate it to its most primitive antecedents which surprisingly enough, seem to lie in the source the sheaf of tales which I have gleaned...Although I have taken in much new psychology into my writing of the short story, I have always tried to approximate to the technique of the folk tale and the influence of these very stories has always been very deep on my short fiction. (Naik, 2004, 33)

In his preface to selected stories, he adds, 'while accepting the form of the folk tale, specially in it's fabulous character, I took in the individual and group psychology of the European continent and tried to synthesise the two styles'(Nayak 180- 81) Anand's view on writing a short story is to write stories in finished form and as rich in content as the stories told among my people: suggest his drawing from the oldest oral tradition for to the youngest written form in literature.

A conscious writer influenced by the modern masters such as Tolstoy and Gorky looks at the short story form as 'neo folk tale' by mingling of ancient and modern traditions, new wine in old bottle' with this regards he states:

...a new kind of fable which extends the old Indian story form into a new age, without the overt lessons of the ancient Indian story, but embodying its verve and vitality and including the psychological understanding of the contemporary period. (Anand 5)

And further in case of his practice Ishvaran in his preface to *Madras Admiral*, depicts his experience in conceiving a story with the influence of the said modern masters as:

The whole concept was built on the hunch that the old Indian short story remains the deepest reference back to the various levels of consciousness. Only it had to take in the disintegration of mind and body of the present age and bring flashes of illumination in to the dark to reveal layers of suppressed feelings-and release. The barbaric narrative with its moral lessons at the end had to yield to the revelation, in which the neo-psychology, which has taken place of morality, is implicit. (vii)

The subjects that Anand mainly deals with as an individuals experience in individual's social situation. Anand comes up all strong when probing in to a characters mind with his humorist enthusiasm to touch the reader's heart. in 'The Lost Child', when the lost child is being soothed by a man who offers the child a ride on the horse, the child is not persuaded but instead "The child's

throat tore in to a thousand shrill and he only shouted : "I want my mother, I want my father." " or, all exhausted Parvati in 'Birth' empties her food basket after delivering a child on her own, and donates the *roti* to the birds as gift-offering, touch the readers who find such simple hearted characters who can part with whatever they can.

A striking feature of Anand's stories is that of the Indian scene and Indian people. The milieu he presents is photographic and realist as is the case with Russian masters as Chekhov. Characters or individuals are at times subordinate to the scenes that are crafted with minute details. e.g. the elaborate and detail description of the mid day of an Indian summer to open his short story 'Duty' from *The Barbers Trade Union and Other Stories* runs as:

The terrible heat as: the sun poured down a flood of fire on the earth, and it seemed as if the desolate fields covered with dense desolate fields covered with dense brown thickets and stalks of grass and cacti were crackling like cinders and would soon be reduced to ashes. (21)

The effect of the scorching sun on the character like Mangal the policeman and thanedar Abdul Karim reminds us of Chekhov's old man and his old horse in 'Lament'. The Russian cold and damp background in contrast to the background of the Indian blazing summer that dominates the story as



Mangalsing the old Sikh sleeps down on duty and reacts in the end by beating a pledging donkey driver; losing all his senses, till his bamboo stick splits in to shreds. As Venugopal observes:

The themes and subjects of Anand are thus mainly aimed at depicting the social situation as seen and felt by the individuals. More often than not, Anand's characters find themselves in an unenviable situation, being a victim of effect traditions and cruel customs, a corrupt social order or heartless administration. Portraying graphically the helpless individual in his pitiful and helpless predicament... (Venugopal 50)

The language that Anand uses to translate the Indian scenes in English is also localised which as he himself says in case of his novels that he literally translates all his dialogues from his mother tongue (Punjabi) and also the narrative in the same way. The translation of Punjabi colonial usages and idioms add to his flavour of presenting the local and characters, e.g.:

'Ram! Ram!' said Baijay Chand, the burly landlord, touching the sacred thread which hung over his ear since he had just been to the lavatory. 'The son of a pig! He is bringing the leather bag of cow-hide into our house and a coat of the marrow of, I don't know, some other animals, and those evil black Angereji

Shoes. Get out! Get out! You son of a devil! You will defile my religion. I suppose you have no fear of anyone now that your father is dead.' (168)

Anand concentrates more on the social situation than the individuals. In 'Old Bapu' an old low caste poor peasant is denied work by the contractor, Ram Singh. Here what is more penetrating than the plight of an individuals through the social injustice which is focused at : 'the caste Hindu urchins have no respect for the untouchable elders anyhow' or a weaving mother going to beg, '*a roti*', the cyclist tinkling his bell furiously to make her walk aside or even the insulting Ram Singh with, "Oh ja, ja oldie", as if not enough the story ends with callousness of people towards others which is as threatening as their deliberate cruelty when a *pan-biri Walla* asks the Old Bapu to move on; "Oh! ja, ja ahead,...don't break my glass by showing your ugly old face!" these despising realities that focus on ground realities of life of the poor marginalised class of the society make the short stories more memorable than the individual characters.

Anand uses more of narration than dialogues to sketch his scenes realistically. Stylistically he uses it successfully to preserve and present the Indian life with varied angles and strata's of society, young and old, rich and poor man and woman, rural and urban, workers and masters. Sensitive towards the contemporary state of society, he uses satire, irony, pathos, force and lively

sense of humour to echo his humanist concerns along with the colour and mood that is Indian. The wide range of themes the output and a humanist at heart marks an ever lasting place as an Indian English short story. M.K. Naik comments on the influence of Indian narrative tradition and locale as:

In Anand's stories, these two qualities are supplemented by a deep awareness of both the strength and limitations of the traditional Indian way of life and the rich understanding of the impact of modernity on it. The locale of all the stories is India, with the exception of three..., Anand is acutely conscious of these twin forces at work in modern Indian life in exposing the limitations of traditions, Anan's mood is in turn compassionate, indignant, ironic and satirical as the subject and situation demand. Religious bigotry, hypocrisy and formalism and the degeneration of institutionalised religion in to an instrument of exploitation is the chief theme in half a dozen stories. (Naik, 2004, 35)

### **R.K.Narayan**

We are first reminded of a writer, whenever we think of short story and particularly Indian English short story is no other than R.K. Narayan. Writer among the trio, R.K. Narayan is the most popular Indian English short story writer. He has gained this position by telling of day today and casual roadside events not bothering to teach, preach, moralise, reform or find deeper meanings.

He presents the events in a lighter vein in a lively easy flowing language employing irony that outshines in his works. Narayan is probably the most original with his journalistic tradition to draw his material from incidents and people he meets to mould them in to delightful compact stories. His collections of short stories are: *Dodu and other stories* (1943) *Malgudi Days* (1943), *An Astrologer's Day and other stories* (1947), *Lawly Road and other stories* (1956) and *A Horse and Two Goats* (1970). *Old and new eighteen short stories* (1981).

In the 'Authors Introduction' to *Malgudi Days* Narayan adopts his peculiar style to comment in a lighter vein on a serious aspect of his art and craft of story telling. Wherein for Narayan writing a short story is a 'welcome diversion' and major aspects of the form as its brevity against the extensive novel writing to be accomplished as a tedious 'task' and on the contrary 'I enjoy writing a short story' is more suggestive of his mastery of the form that comes to him so easily. Narayan's art of characterisation is a major feature and contribution along with the readability with readers as well as critics on which in the introduction he marks with ease something that is striking about the scope of the short story form in the Indian scenario. He states,

The material available to the story writer in India is limitless. Within a broad climate of inherited culture there are endless variations: every individual differs

from every other individual, not only economically, but in outlook, habits and a day-to-day philosophy. It is stimulating to live in a society that is not standardised or mechanised, and is free from monotony. Under such conditions the writer has only to look out of the window to pick up a character (and thereby a story). (7)

And again the little but critical crises that the characters are to face in a given situation is what is the writers interest. The familiar and ordinary crisis in the life or at times a few moments of crises for an ordinary character make the stories readable. According to Narayan:

A short story must be short- on that point there is universal agreement, but the definition of a short story is understood differently at different levels, ranging from the news reporters use of the term to the literary pundit's profundities on the subject of plot, climax, structure and texture, with dos and don'ts for the writer. Speaking for myself, I discover a story when a personality passé through a crisis of spirit or circumstances. In the following thirty-odd tales, almost invariably the central character faces some kind of crisis and either resolves it or lives with it. But some stories may prove to be nothing more than a special or significant moment in someone's life or a pattern of existence brought to view. (8)

Narayan is a representative writer whose stories are included in a large number of anthologies and inevitably so when the anthologies have the focus on or section for Indian English writers. Narayan who is highly regarded as a foremost novelist with his first novel *Swami and Friends* (1935) had established himself as a distinct writer. The structure of *swami and Friends* is as good as collection of short stories where each chapter can be read independently. It is in 1943 along with the publication of *Malgudi Days* Narayan's career as a short story writer began with the publication of *Cyclone and Other Stories*, then to follow in the pre-Independence period was, *An Astrologer's Day and other stories* (1947).

He is a writer who loves life, and wants to extract all the joys even from the most crude situations or crooked character. Narayan looks at the world with wonder stuck wide open eyes of a child. His narration is in keeping with typically Indian oral tradition where the striking extreme simplicity and happy, compact end make stories 'readable' and interesting. His narrator is 'The Talkative Man' (as he calls) who represents any common man telling or retelling his experience or tale at any gathering, it is also an ancient tradition of a narrating in Indian tradition. Narayan takes his readers directly to the action and locate he presents right from the opening of his story.

All his stories as the case with his novels are set in Malgudi, which is a paradise so close to the writers heart, that it takes a few lines to sketch the surrounding to engulf the reader in to the place and mood to land in the arena with characters so familiar from every wake of life who do not need much description to delay the entry in to the story. This gives the brevity to his stories which comes so naturally to Narayan which is an artistic device that is part of age old Indian oral tradition. The narrator 'Talkative Man' is a device to serve the purpose of 'telling' the story in a manner where the narrator is in a haste to land on the issue, event, moment or happening as quickly as possible. The stories devised with the Talkative Man as the narrator can be distinguished from the other stories as more fantastic. Talkative Man aids the telling which needs extra efforts and skill to make-believe in something bombastic and more than real. Young and old, rich and poor, man and woman, rural and urban and Workers and masters is sensitive towards the contemporary state of society, he uses satire, irony, pathos, force and lively sense of humour to echo his humanist concerns along with the colour and mood that is Indian.

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The fiction world of Narayan is largely children and middle class man in semi-urban locale Malgudi. *Swami and his Friends* are memorable sketches of young and innocent boys that sweep the readers to their childhood days. It is their life full of curiosity, energy, sports, tricks that amuse with unending activities. All these stories can easily be connected to give it a novel form. The television serialisation of *Malgudi days* and *Swami and Friends* and the *Crude* made in to a film is a mark of Narayan's fiction that is some picturesque in locale and accurate in sketching the characters that can easily be moulded in various forms of art.

Narayan is at home when he presents the child characters, he is a good observer and a student of child-psychology. It is evidently so in *Swami and Friends* as well as many other interesting and thematically well structured stories like 'A Hero' 'The Rear' or 'father Help'. In 'Father's Help' the very opening draws us to the unwillingness of a child to go to school on 'Monday morning' after a Sunday break, revealing the experience which is too familiar with the boyhood days innocent exploits, narrated in a detached comic vein.



Narayan's stories are eminently readable which at times is regarded as artless style. It is because of Narayan's narration that is drawing from the oral tradition of story telling. The opening rouses our interest through the familiarity that is ironically stated. As in 'An Astrologers Day' or 'The Axe', Valen, in 'The Axe' is fore told by an astrologer passing through the village that he would live in a three-storied house surrounded by many acres of garden. The narration then is chronological and compact with the 'happenings' or 'events' that are well told by a 'talkative man' with deil surrounding be it of a school, a garden, a street corner or a house hold. N.K. Nayak remarks the defect in Narayan's fiction as:

...Though Narayan's stories are always readable, they are perhaps not as significant an achievement as his major novels. What one misses, even in the best of them is that transformation of irony from a simple stance into a Meaningful vision of life which is unmistakably effected in *The Guide* and *The Man-eater of Malgudi*. (2004, 183)

It's often said of Narayan, unlike Mulk Raj Anand or Khushwant Singh, though his concern is sociological, he has no wish to bring about a change in existing condition. Infect it could be a merit with regards to the artistic and keen observation of many facets of Indian life, life that is celebration, accepted as it is

with no urge to direct or dictate. The characters have a free play in the setting and situations that are life like and photographic.

Humour and Irony are the markers of Narayan's short stories. Irony is the successive note in most of his stories that is also be a device of comic effect. It could be irony of circumstance - as in 'Engine Trouble', or character's intricacies, human psychology as in 'Doctors Word', reversals as in case of Swami not willing to go to School in 'Father's Help' along with the numerous titles and ends of stories that can account as good examples of irony. M.K.Naik in his 'Malgudi Minor: The Short Stories of R.K.Narayan' is critical about the limitations of Narayan, 'satisfied with surface irony and snap endings'(Naik, 2004, 93),not able to contribute a single great world class story as can be marked in case of his contemporaries Anand and Raja Rao as:

While Narayan has practically written no story which can be called dull, one might well ask at the same time whether he has written any which can truly be called a major achievement to rank with Maupassant's "Ball of Fat", Chekhov's "The School Mistress"...to mention only a few memorable examples. Even the most striking of Narayan's efforts like "The Doctors Word", "Engine Trouble" and "Seventh House" do not appear to deserve to be ranked with these universally acknowledged masterpieces. to compare Narayan , the story writer, with his Indo-English peers is also to realise that he has produced nothing in this

genre to match Mulkraj Anand's "Birth" and "The Lost Child" or Raja Rao's "Janvi" and "The Policeman and the Rose." (Naik, 2004, 92)

In explanation to such an evaluation Naik points at the fact that it was initial practice to write for *The Hindu* for the average readers with a 'dose of half an hour amusement alone.' (Naik, 2004, 93) He ends his write-up with the same note of demerit in Narayan as:

Narayan short stories therefore appear to be, by and large, a museum of minor motifs. They lack the kind of thematic weight and the richness of experience which the major short stories of the world invariably possess. The shorter fiction of Narayan generally reveals the artist as Autolycus- "A snapper up of unconsidered trifles", and not as Jacob, wrestling with the angel. In the major novels, Narayan rises to his fullest stature as a master of existential irony; in the short stories he mostly remains a small-time ironist.' (Naik, 2004, 94)

## **Raja Rao**

Raja Rao (1908-2006) who is an extraordinary remarkable Indian English writer meditating on a traditional Indian view of India and its spiritual identity and his fidelity to Indian thought and culture. Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan too Indianise the scenes in analysing the contemporary human Situation artistically

with the experimentation in language and technique to bring in the Indian narrative tradition in the modern short story form but it is Raja Rao who puffs the spirit with his inward gaze.

This is a forward is the journey of short story form from its emergence in Indian English literature to, Indian Independence. It is an interesting study of the development of Indian English short story to maturity where English language is no more alien and is asserted as the language of 'our intellectual make up- like Sanskrit.' This speaks of the consciousness of the Indian writer as well as the mark to estimate the evolution in Indian English short story.

Raja Rao one among the trio with Anand and Narayan claims the merit of being regarded as a short story writer of the highest rank. In comparison with the other two, Raja Rao who is more reputed as a novelist is not a prolific writer of short stories as is the case with the long stretch of time he took in writing novels. In case of his fictional and non fictional world the chronology of the publication asserts that writing was a *sadhana* rather than a passion, His endeavour in writing is more of metaphysical quest and meditating on the idea of India. His fictional works include, *Kanthapura*, (1938), *The Cow of the Barricades, and Other Stories*, (1947 ), *The Serpent and the Rope*, (1960 ), *The Cat and Shakespeare : A Tale of India*,( 1965 ), *Comrade Kirilov*, (1976 ), *The Policeman and the Rose: Stories*, (1978 ),

*The Chessmaster and His Moves*, (1988), *On the Ganga Ghat*, (1989), *The Best of Raja Rao*, (1998), while the Non-Fiction writing we have, *Changing India: An Anthology* (edited with Iqbal Singh), (1939) *Whither India?* (ed. with Iqbal Singh), (1948), *The Meaning of India: Essays*, (1996), *The Great Indian Way: A Life of Mahatma Gandhi biography*, (1998), *Daughter of the Mountain* (Volume 2 of the Chess master trilogy), (2008), and *A Myrobalan in the Palm of Your Hand* (Volume 3 of the Chessmaster trilogy).

He has just one pre-Independence short story collection to his name *The Cow of the Barricades and Other Stories*, (1947). It includes nine stories written since 1930s and onwards and collected in the anthology. The next collection took three decades; it was *Policeman and the Rose* (1978) wherein four of the seven stories are repeated. Once again after a long gap of time, *On the Ganga Ghat* (1989) has eleven stories that are numbered, not titled individually. They can be read in continuity as a novel. In all Raja Rao has published twenty three short stories. Though fewer in number they have wide range, as Makarant Paranjape in his introduction to *Fictions: The Best of Raja Rao* states:

Yet what he loses in length he achieves in depth. More than any other short story writer, Raja Rao aims at presenting in the full and inevitable aspect of India:

the aspect of cultural past and its tradition on its peoples attitudes to life's ups and downs at the same time. (ix)

Turning to the only pre-Independence collection, *The Cow of the Barricades and Other Stories* 'Janvi' and 'Akkayya' are the stories on widows with the theme of social reform and condition of women. 'Narsiga', 'The Cow of the Barricades' the title story, and 'In Khandesh' we see the impact British rule and the freedom struggle with Gandhian movement at the backdrop. 'The Little Gram Shop' and 'A Client' are realistic sketches of the times, while 'The True Story of Kanakapala, the Protector of Gold' and 'companions' mark the real stamp of Raja Rao, using popular narrative mode of incorporating popular myths. The stories in the first phase reflect social and political issues as position of women, caste distinction, freedom struggle, Gandhian movement, social conducts etc. But they are told in the Indian oral or folk tradition so objectively that it does not seem to have any preach moral deductive design. The characters are simple folk who are courageous, heroic, loyal and wise. The widows in 'Janvi' and 'Akkayya' titled after their names are disturbing sketches of the plight of young and an old widow but they are so well drawn to reflect the happiness of life even in their misery. Janvi is content and proud to be a servant of a Revenue Inspector and Goddess like mistress. She is 'good like a cow', or 'almost a mother' that builds heightens the character from untouchable young widow to mother Goddess. The

story does bring to surface the caste system and social inhuman practices but is presented keeping in view the Indian mind that understands and capture every aspect as a part of a whole, so to say making myth. As C.V. Venugopal very appositely states:

More than any other short story writer, Raja Rao aims at presenting in full an inevitable aspect of India: the impact of its cultural past and its tradition on its people's attitude to life's ups and downs. At the same time, Raja Rao also shares with our writers of 'forties zeal of reform, for he, even as many other Indians who have developed a broader vision did, felt then a need for a through overhauling of social set up. (62)

The title story 'The Cow of the Barricades' is one such story that presents the pre-Independence scenario of freedom struggle. Gauri, the cow, becomes the symbol of Mother India against the red man. The cow is as sacred as holy Ganga thus employing a title that has deep rooted meaning in the cultural context is also noteworthy in his later short story collection *On the Ganga Ghat*. It is the basic understanding in India that Mother- Goddess, cow, river is a source of strength, the protector against all evils and redeemer of all the sorrows. Thus Rao who right from his early phase as a writer shows the traces of his metaphysical inclinations. Thus it is a cow who faces the bullet of the red man on its forehead

to inspire the freedom fighters. Well incorporated is the Gandhian way of non-violence that is suggested with the fall of Gauri.

Raja Rao's chief contribution to short story form is the diction and use of Indian traditional narrative techniques that comes naturally to him due to his vision of India. His setting and characters are mostly rural. He limits to his vision as a *sadhak* and practices the creative gift to present the Indian culture and thought. Writing consciously with this awareness of Indian identity which he relates with spirituality, his characters are simple, ignorant, and God-fearing with utmost faith in rebirth and Karma theory and live by the virtues prescribed by ancient scriptures that reflect in their day today life. They live by the idea of virtuous life accepting the fate with a blend of rustic superstitions and class consciousness which is part of their life. Venugopal commenting on the aspect of in comparison to Narayan and Anand remarks:

Of all the Indian story writers in English, it is only Raja Rao who restricts himself to a particular section of the contemporary world scene. Ishvaran and Anand present a whole cross section of humanity-the rich and the poor the young and the old, the peasant and the city dweller, the hypocrite and the innocent. Anand has a thorough knowledge of the rural as well as the urban life, and can portray graphically various strata of the society, from that of a maharaja to a barber boy



.Even Narayan who has no fascination for the village at all, has innumerable sketches of the variegated appearance of human nature. Raja Rao on the other hand, primarily concerns himself with the simple rustic, and even if, as in 'A Client', he depicts a college student in Bangalore, the boy has nothing of the sophistication of the city about him; he smells from head to foot of the gullibility which is associated with the village-born.( 69)

Technique wise Raja Rao draws from Indian classical literature and experiments with the oral narrative tradition of folk tale and legends. The simple straight forward beginnings and personal intervention at the end is his way of writing as if 'telling'. As we can mark in 'Akkayya' that ends with a remark, 'Anyway, here I have *Written* the story of Akkayya, may be her only funeral story.'(Italics mine). Technically it might seem unnecessary or even the critics might frown at, but it becomes part and parcel of 'telling' in the oral tradition that is translated to the written one as a device. Again in case of *Kanakpala, Protector of Gold*, he ends with, 'I too have dreamt of it, believe me-else I wouldn't have written this story.', or at times to give a factual support to his story he would prolong the end.

Indian life as he envisages and wants his readers to realise comes as an experience through his well meditated image of India, India that draws meaning

from ancient texts as Vedas and Upanishads that looks at life in continuity, the traditions keep on with the continuity. In the process he translates the scene, the diction, the characters, the actions, the movements, the gestures, the postures and thought in an 'alien' language with such a ease is regarded as one of the achievements that not on the Indian English short story, but an achievement for Indian writing in English to have contributed to the world literature. Venugopal speaks of the achievement as:

Perhaps the most striking achievement of Raja Rao is in his use of English idiom to translate its counterpart. He has evolved his consummate skill, a language flexible enough not only to express the nuances of Indian life and temperament but powerful enough to evoke vivid pictures of Indian scene. His purpose was to make English language yield to Indian needs and the language of his short stories is a happy fulfilment of his aim. His language here purely springs from the purely rural, and therefore natural, life and his words and phrases more than describe a scene in all its colour and beauty and simplicity as well in its heat and its gloom. He translates oaths, adages, and common sayings from his mother tongue Kannada, but the skill with which he gives them naturalness has rendered them valuable contribution to English. (72)

Raja Rao well known as a novelist with a metaphysical pursuit that places him class apart from the other writers does not fail his class of readers in case of

short fiction. His 'India: A Fable' and 'The Policeman and the Rose' though published later are the stories written during the period of *The Serpent and the Rope* and *The Cat and Shakespeare : A Tale of India* has most characteristics of Raja Rao. As M.K. Naik concludes his discussion on Raja Rao with a tribute; the reverberating symbolism in both these stories makes them brief but memorable metaphysical documents in fictional form without a parallel in the field of the Indian English short story.'(2004, 185)

Raja Rao's critique of language proves not his concerns in using a foreign language but his conscious use and success in moulding English to his purpose. He is rightly compared with Irish writer as Singe who expressed the Irish life at its best in Irish English. In his oft quoted forward to *Kanthapura* he states:

The telling has not been easy. One has to convey in a language that is not ones own, the spirit that is one's own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions as certain thought movement that look maltreated in an alien language. I use the word 'alien', yet English is not really alien language to us. It is the language of our intellectual make-up – like Sanskrit or Persian was before – but not of our emotional make-up. We are all instinctively bilingual, many of us write in our own language and in English. We can not write like the English. We should not. We can write only as Indians. We have grown to look at large world as part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be dialect which will

some day prove to be distinctive and colourful as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it. (Ashcroft 296)

And it is the contribution of these early master story writers who have justified that Indian English has a distinct identity. Raja Rao is distinct in his style that moulds language as well as the form to mould and infuse 'the tempo of Indian life' into the English expression. As expressed further in the 'Authors Forward' he expresses his clarity of understanding that goes into creative feature of his much meditated works as:

...We, in India think quickly, and when we move we move quickly. There must be in the sun of India that makes us rush and tumble and run on. And our paths are paths interminable. The *Mahabharata* has 214,778 verses and the *Rama-yana* 48,000. The *Puranas* are endless and innumerable. We have neither punctuation nor the treacherous 'ats' and 'ons' to bother us- we tell one interminable tale. ... This was and still is the ordinary style of our storytelling. (Ashcroft 296)

Raja Rao is extraordinary for the same that he accounts as 'ordinary style'. This speaks of his discerning view of India that is a sacred land of ancient civilization and has its own distinct way of reflecting to life as eternal. All his stories are projection of the ideals that India cherishes in all its worldly limitations.

Other notable writers in the period are K.A. Abbas and Bhabhani Bhattacharya. Abbas, a journalist and a script writer, has four short story collections to his name. *Rice and Other Stories* is the first one to be published in the year of Independence. A writer wedded to leftist ideology comes up with social scenes which project its bitterness and leftist propaganda. Bhabhani Bhattacharya too has the first of his two collections *Indian Cavalcade* published in 1948 while *Steel Hawk* was published in 1968. The early anthology is retelling interesting episodes of Indian history.

### **Post-Independence writers**

There are not many great short story writers to list nor have there been experiments to account in case of short story writers after the Independence. The literary historian as M.K. Naik states:

The variety and fecundity of the post-Independence are hardly evinced in the field of short story, writing of which still continues to be mostly a by-product of the novel workshop. Of the novelist Bhattacharya, Khushwant Singh, Malgonkar, Nahal and Joshi have produced short story collections, while among the women writers apart from Ruth Prawar Jhabwala, Anita Desai, and Attiya Hussain, the number of practitioners of this form is not very large. (247)

Today, the Indian short story in Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Marathi, in fact, in almost all regional languages and of course in English, has widened its span. It incorporates the charms of traditional touch, modern reality and an artistic style. In brief no major shift is evident in development of short story form as is the case with novel. Writers like Khushwant Singh, Manohar Malgonkar, Ruth Pravar Jhabwala, along with a few later writers who are recognised as short story writers are Mohan Das, Bunny Robin, Ruskin Bond, Chamanlal, and Arun Joshi. There has been a presence felt with woman writers after 'seventies with Anita Desai, Nargis Dalal, Attia Hussain, Shashi Deshpande and Dina Mehta. Almost all writers belong to the English educated class from metro cities or living abroad, who mainly deal with the urban life. They could not give a distinct identity to Indian English short story as the novel has. In case of woman writers the stories revolve round the social domestic life and woman issues:

Since the Independence, the Indian short story has matured considerably. It is able to portray the social realities and to record, with precision, the blows dealt out to Indian traditions and value system. Nothing escapes the notice of the argues-eyed story-teller. Political behavior, the joint family system, the generation gap, changing attitudes towards love, marriage and sex and the feminist ideology — have all been subjected to incisive analysis. (Bande, 4)

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## CHAPTER III

### PRE-INDEPENDENCE GUJARATI SHORT STORY

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#### The Early Beginning: Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

Nineteenth century is known as *Sudhara Yug*, the age of reforms, in Gujarati Literature. It is the transitory period culminating in *Pandit Yug* which resulted in the emergence of different literary prose forms like, essay, novel, new drama, autobiography, biography, short story, critical essays, travelogues, letters, memoirs, journalistic writings, diaries, and varied methods of documentations along with translations that were influenced by western literary traditions.

Short story form, as has been a universal phenomenon, was the last to evolve in Gujarati Literature too. We can not disregard India's rich oral tradition that is a major influence to world literature. *Puran, katha, varta, drashtant, akhyans* folklores, bards, *Kirtans*, dance performances, *bhavai*, and various other traditions narrated stories, along with the prehistoric *Vedic* and *Upanashadic Literature*. The oldest of oral epics *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* are the store houses of mythical stories keeping alive the story telling tradition even today. *Panchtantra* need no introduction or acclamation to state its importance and influence to world literature. In Indian vernaculars, terms such as, Kahhani (Kannad), Varta

(Gujarati), Katha (Marathi), Afsana (Kashmiri) and others indicate its continuation of long nourished story telling tradition.

Short story is the youngest child of modern literature, when we consider it as a written literary form; it emerged in most of the Indian languages almost at the same time in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Nineteenth century was also a period of formation of vernaculars, oral, classical and folk literature was being documented. The experimentation in new literary forms enhanced due to the reformist spirit of the age that was directly influenced by the west under the British rule and the English education system. In Gujarat writers like Narmad and Dalpatram moulded the Gujarati language in the process their experimentation in different genres. Though Narmad remembered as a poet 'Kavi Narmad', has voluminous amount of prose works, such as periodical essays, autobiography, critical notes, diary etc. but did not take up shorts story or novel forms as he must have considered essays more instrumental in his reformist mission. Thus the time was not ripe or not much was done with the limited literacy with regards to short story form in the 1850's and 60's which proved to be a historical period of acceptance and experimentation of prose forms as well as criticism, research, and translations. But along with novel there

were attempt to write stories on shorter canvas and compiling the traditional stories or tales.

The modern period in Gujarati literature begins from *Narmad yug*. Namad states, 'there is a need of new *gathas* (stories) in new age... drama and *gathas* are the two instruments to improve upon the taste and wisdom.', in favour of story telling in a novel way but never practiced the form that he might have not thought so instrumental in the *sudhara yug*.

The first account of attempt in short story writing could be traced with Dalpatram(1820-98) who wrote independently and imaginatively in his collection *Tarkik Bodh* (1870), a collection of stories that he had been publishing individually since 1865. He used mythological, legendary, and folk stories with moral values. Dhumketu (1892-1965) the pioneer writer and critic to shape the short story form in Gujarati draws our attention at the first attempt at writing imagery stories in Gujarati by Dalpatram. Even Ranchhodbhai Udayram's (1839-88) collection *Prastavik Kathasamaj*, (1866) is anecdotal relying on the folk tales. At the same time *Gathasamaj*, a collection of three short stories are adoptions from English. Also the collection by a Parsi writer Faramji Bamanji *Gujarat ane Kahtiawardesh ni Juni Vartao* (1872) as the name suggest is an attempt of retelling or documenting the popular folk stories in written script. After almost a decade Smt. Shungar

translated Chamber's short stories in 1866 titled as *Tunki Kahanio* contributed to introducing and familiarizing the short story form for the first time. *Buddhi ane Rudhi ni Katha* is an attempt that was considered worthy by Navalram when he comments that, 'the 32 pages are of the value of 320' is more of figurative writing. It seems that the *Narmad Yug* did not contribute much in the development of the form or study its characteristics.

Translations by major writers from *Pandit Yug* to fifties by all major writers played a major role in introduction of short story form yet to shape and develop to be accepted as a modern form of literature. Navalram Pandya's *Natyakatharas*, (translations of 23 *Lambus tales from Shakespeare*) and Shakespeare *Kathasamgraha Katha Samaj* translated *Arabian Nights* Part – 1 & 2, (1889). Keshavlal Harshadray Dhruv's *Melani Mudrika*, (Mudrarakshas) 1889, Amrushatak. 1892., *Kathasarit Sagar*. Part – 1 & 2, 1891.along with the elite writers Anand Shankar Dhruv, Nhanalal, Kalapi, and almost all major writers translated narratives all through the last two decades of nineteenth century.

Prior to this there were early attempts that Dhumketu marks in his '*Gujarati Bhashamaa Navlikano Vikas*' in introduction to his anthology *Tankha Mandal- IV*, 'with the publication of collected works as *Ishapnitini Vaato*, (1828)

*Ishapnitikathao*, (1854) *Dodasalini Vaato*, *Panchopakhyan*, etc. were some of the compilations of the ethical tales.'

'Pandit Yug' recognised the short story as an art form. The last two decades of nineteenth century can wholly be remembered and dedicated to the publication of an epic novel *Sarasvatichanda*, by Govardhanram, but there was no development in case of short story form. The elitist distanced from the shorter form, Govardhanram never attempted at short story though there are good number of short stories incorporated in his masterpiece. During this phase Ichharam . Desai's illustrations in a religious text *Chandrakant* resemble the short story form. Also the comical sketches by Ramanbhai Nilkanth in the periodical *Hasya Mandir* are noteworthy. Among them 'Chitthi' is one such story to tell the readers the importance of a chit in our daily life. His publication of '*Bhomiyani Boolthap*' (1896) Drew the attention of critics like Ramchandra Shukla to call it the first Gujarati short story. He remarks 'Before this there has not been an attempt to write such independent story in Gujarati Literature', even Umashankar Joshi had written an article to establish '*Bhomiyani Boolthap*' as the first short story. In case of the poets there was very little output by the poets of the age. Kalapi's 'Mahatma Muldas' or '*Pankhdio*' a collection by Nanhalal are not at all artistic enough to be regarded as short stories.

## The Rise of Periodicals

The first major development that shaped and encouraged the rise of short story was the rise of in Gujarati like *Buddhi Prakash*, *Buddhi Vardhak*, *Aryadharm Prakash*, which invited the writers to write or translate Russian, French, English, Hindi and Bengali short stories into Gujarati by publishing shorter tales.

Later periodicals such as *Gyansudha*, (1896-97) *Chandra Sahitya* (1897), *Sundri Bodh*, *Varta Varidh* and *Vismi Sadi* did publish some artistic short stories. Rammohanrai Desai had written simple stories in *Sundri Bodh* edited by him, and published a collection *Varta Varidhi*. As yet short story was not taken seriously but was regarded as 'time-pass or 'light-reading' literature. If we look at the announcement in the issue of *Vismi Saddi*, May-1916 which says, (in the next issue) along with other attractions and interesting articles mainly the 'light-reading' like story will be published so that it serves as good reading for the ones going to spend summer on hill-stations.' By now it was largely accepted that short story is an independent form and not a short form of novel. Pandit Yug which preceded Sudhara Yug, all the literary activities was influenced by the reformist zeal of the age which focused on the social problems of the age.

The notable writers of the Pandit Yug who contributed to the development of short story were Raman Nilkanth, Narayan Hemchandra, Dahyabhai, Laxmanbhai Patel, Ranjit Ram, Haji Mohammed, 'Narad'- Batukbhai Umarwadia, Gokal Raichura, B K Thakor, Ambalal Desai, Oliya Joshi, Rammohunram Desai, Keshavprasad Desai, Dansukhlal Mehta and Malaynil (Kanchanlal Vasudev Mehta), their works reflect the reformist spirit of the times, or they were romantic love stories that were well known or imaginative. They were the forerunners to create a favourable ground for short story. They generated interest in the readers, writers, thinkers and critics to look and perceive it as a developing literary form.

### **The Dawn: Breakthrough in First Decade of Twentieth Century**

Ishwarlal Dave in his *Toonki Varta: Shilp ane Sarjan*, remarks on the development of the short story form with the three generations of Gujarati modern writers as:

The first three generations of Modern Age accepted the existence of short story, but the short story bloomed with the forth generation of modern writers. The first generation was of the reformers, they made deductive use. The second generation was of the elites who had no place for short story in their devotional to literature. The third generation was of the poets who paid no attention to *katharas* (prose) and were immersed in their *kavyaras* poetic endeavours. The

forth generation (in Munshiyug) Malaynil (Kanchanlal Vasudev Mehta), Munshi, Dhansukhlal and Dhumketu; the four creative writers mastered the art of short story. (32)

The short stories that got recognition and appraisal the as pioneering, or the novel works of art in the dawn of the twentieth century are Ambalal Desai's 'Shantidas' (1900) Ranjitram Vavabhai's 'Hira' (1904), Dansukhlal's 'Baa', Malaynil's 'Govalani' (1918). They have been much discussed and analysed as they have a historic as well as literary importance in the emergence of a new short story form.

Among the above stated short stories there has been a lot of controversies and emphasis to establish one or the other of the short story as the first Gujarati short story. Initially 'Baa' or 'Govalani' were much focused upon but now Ambalal Desai's 'Shantidas' is largely accepted as the first Gujarati short story after its disregard for a long. Dr. Jayant A. Mehta in his '*Toonki Varata: Ek Darshan*' evaluates and establishes it as the first short story in Gujarati, to mark the early evolution of the short story in comparison to the other Indian languages. 'Shantidas', published in 1900 is acclaimed as the first Gujarati short story, is a maiden work by an economist, lawyer and a zealous activist in



*Swadeshi movement* who used the modern short story form so remarkably that it has all the characteristics of a well written short story.

‘Shantidas’ is a story that discusses the economical problem of the times along with unfolding the adverse effect of English education, urban lifestyle and industrial development on a small village with a young hero Bhikharidas who is sent to Mumbai for English education and is changed adversely keeping with the village life ,culture and customs. The adjectival naming of the characters is suggestive of its explicit and deductive nature but adds to humour which makes it readable as a well structured story. The story opens with the picture of a small village that is self sufficient, peaceful and a happy place that represents an ideal society where people are simple, hard working, inter dependent, caring and highly cultured. The writer could present such a realistic village, as the microcosm of Indian life that sounds utopian but was a reality before the advent of foreign rule, in a single paragraph to prove his awareness to the brevity that short story demands. Let us look at the remarkable opening of ‘Shantidas’ that is to prove and juxtapose against the change that is the central in the story:

There is an old village of *Patidars*, some five to seven miles from Mehmdabad in *Charotar*. Some two hundred houses are of patidars and the rest are *Vaniyas* Brahmins and craftsmen. There is not much debit in the village. The *shahukar*

Banias trade are traders rather than money-leaders. A large and huge Chorah is built by the people, The Hindu temple is also good; and there is a community hall for the travellers and saints and thus the village has a good reputation as far as *Kaanam*. (Mehta, 2007, 19)

The back ground is well presented against after-effects of the English education and influence of industrialisation. The story mainly discusses the state of artisans in the village due to the invention of foreign shoes that are ordered by village boys through Bhikharidas that result in unemployment of cobblers. This also affects the business of tailors, potters and all local artisans who are interdependent. The village economy is disrupted due to high education fees as well as the foreign shoes that add to the unemployment of the villagers to an extent to think of leaving the village.

The story is so well structured with the use of characters, background, language, dialogues, and action that though it is regarded as the first short story in Gujarati, the didactic theme does not hinder the structure is very rightly considered as an evolutionary work.

Ambalal Desai was ahead of his times to bring up a new subject and an issue of *Swadeshi* and the effects of colonial rule that bankrupted the society not just economically but culturally and morally by loosing faith in whatever was its

own. 'Shantidas' unfolds multiple issues through well worked out structure. It would not be out of place to see how the writer succeeds in telling the reader as to what is going on in the mind of the character and the psychological state that help develop the course of action. When Bhikharidas goes to Mumbai the father makes him aware of their economical condition and also warns him of the attractions of 'Indrapuri' and is asked to promise to pay attention to studies with head down. But after going to Mumbai see how the change is described artistically by using monologue to reach the inner rooms of the characters mind:

When the Government College opened, Bhikharidas went to Mumbai and, got admitted. For some days, taking great care of his father's advice and his promise Bhikharidas toiled hard. As time passed, the company of other boys kept on adding up. When he saw the shining shoes of the Parsi boys of Mumbai, he often felt, 'How nice, if I have such shoes!' Such desires took possession but Bhikharidas suppressed them. But again and again he was inclined to the shoes. In this way, some days passed. But at last, Bhikharidas could not help his desire. He thought, 'I spend three hundred rupees a year and from that, buying a pair of foreign shoes for three or four rupees, is not going to make a big difference. If I cut down in any other way, many rupees will be adjusted, and in this way, father's advice would be followed, the vow would be kept and our promise would also be kept and our heart would also be contented.' (Mehta, 2007, 21)

**Dhansukhlal Mehta** (1890-1974) stakes the claim to be the forerunner is due to many a reason, as the writer has comparatively contributed in large quantity in his times, with three collections. 'Baa' is among his best which is a social tragic story of a mother who is dejected by the two sons and the daughter-in-laws for whom *Baa*, the mother, is a hindrance in their individual independent married life. The psychological projection of the mother and the other characters is noteworthy. More the mother tries to cope up with the situation, to be a good mother in-law, the more she suffers the shock which ultimately results in a tragic end. 'Baa' is translated in various languages which speak of its contribution to the development of the form in Gujarati in early twenties.

**Kanchanlal Vasudev Mehta** (1892-1919), better known by his penname 'Malaynil', is regarded as the pioneer short story writer. After graduation in 1912 he had started contributing to the monthlies like *Sundari Bodh* and *Varta Varidhi* with poems and short stories under the pseudonym 'Golmatol Sharma'. Initially he wrote humorous stories but gradually turned artistic because of his reading of English works. 1913 onwards he wrote using the pen-name 'Malaynil' and continued till the end. Malaynil was the first to free the short story form from the moralising ends. 'Govalni' is the first short story that an example of purely

artistic endeavour. Malaynil died young in the formative years as a creative writer.

There are no two opinions about the masterpiece story 'Govalni' (The Milk Maid), first published in 1918 in the monthly periodical *Vismi Saadi*, a milestone text in Gujarati literature. It is the finest creation ever, to compare it with the best of the stories in world literature. 'Govalani' was rightly regarded as the first short story in Gujarati keeping in view its originality and artistic design. The fascinating, young milkmaid is wonderfully created to remain imprinted in the minds of the reader with her swiftness that she walks, sweetness of her call, healthy young body, teasing talks, crafty smiles, rustic look and boldness, and above all her cunningness! The brevity of narration is remarkable. It is a story of a man infatuated after the voice of a village bread milkmaid who is bold and beautiful. The writer right from the opening wastes no time to sketch the milkmaid who is the reason of envy of all the married women and an enchantress of the young hearts. The story opens thus:

She was extremely young. To some the rose stirs on the lips at fourteen, while to some others eyes sparkle at seventeen or eighteen. But at the age of fifteen the milk maid's voice was like that of a cuckoo. Innocence was bidding farewell. Infancy was paving way for youth now. The blooming bud was bursting.

Though not educated, she was clever. Though not city-bred, she was gentle and well-mannered. Though not high born, she was fair.

It seemed as if Laxmi, the Goddess of fortune, appeared, when she came to the village from the outskirts with a glittering pot of brass on her head. Her sweet call '*Dudh levu se Dudh*' was rung in every street and all those brushing their teeth would look at her. For the male folk she was a good omen whereas to women she was the cause of jealousy. (Mehta, 2007, 43)

The lively and witty narration adds to the charm and flow of the story that plays with the affection of a crazed married Chandan, the hero, who follows the milkmaid and is all gone mad with ecstasy not knowing what are the designs in the crafty mind of the clever milkmaid. The dialogues used to give an added effect are remarkable not only are the well written but are evidence to the writers craft in an early stage of developing form of short story. When Chandan loses his senses and is in the romantic daydream, he chitchats:

"Milk-maid! Which caste do you belong to?" I began to talk while having milk.

"Oh, so – you are defiled!"

"No, no, I am not asking for that but just to know. Tell me, to which caste do you belong?"

"Why? We are cattle rearer! Shepherd"

"Then... are you married or not?" My craziness was crossing the bounds.

"I'm married", she said sheepishly.

"To whom?"

"What Sandanbhai, How can I utter his name? Especially, in case of our caste."

"Do you understand what love is?!" I had lost my senses, and did not know what could be asked what should not be. She failed to understand my query.

"What?"

"Do you know what affection is? Does your husband love you?"

"Sandanbhai, are you in your senses?"

"No, you will have to tell me. I have come up pursuing you to this place. I was scared to talk to you in the street. Talk to me, now if you do not talk to me, I swear by my life." Having said, so, I sat in front of her. Between us there lay the milk-pots. . (Mehta, 2007, 47)

Above all merits the appeal of the story is the jolt that the readers get along with Chandan (Sandanbhai), the technique with which it ends. It has the most striking end, 'a real sting at the tail', to remind the reader of great masters as Maupassant or O. Henry who designed the "surprising-ending". 'Govalani's memorable end unfolds the designs of the cunning milkmaid who goes and calls the wife of Chandan with an excuse that she had forgotten her pot in the village!

The plight of Chandan caught red-handed by the wife is painted with minimum use of words, like the last stroke of the artist the story ends in giving a naughty pose:

For a while, we were silent. And then as the lightening strikes and a child is frightened, and *as malati* is terrified , and sorrow enters when joy is at hand, suddenly from the open window of the shed, my wife peeped in. She stared at me with a fuming face. At the very sight, my body began to tremble. Due to anger her eyes welled-up with tears. She was puzzled as to what to speak and what not. She had an urge to burst out. Yet she did not utter a single word. She just kept on staring at me, I looked downwards. Dali... cunning Dali was giggling hiding her face behind her sari.

If a painter was to paint three pictures here, it could be one that of *Kalika*, second that of the sorceress and third that of a fool. (Mehta, 2007, 50)

### **The Rising Star: Dhumketu (Gaurishankar Govardhan Joshi)**

Gaurishankar Govardhan Joshi, popularly known as 'Dhumketu', (1892-1965) is the pioneering short story writer whose immense contribution can be thought of with the corpus magnum bulk of output he has to his name. In four decades he published 24 short story collections with 492 stories. He encompasses a wider range of characters in all the wakes of life, from every states of society with



romantic air and realistic vision. (The variety and scope of subject makes him Synonymous to short story).

Dhumketu practiced the novel, short story, autobiography, drama, and essay forms but he is primarily remembered as a short story writer. Ila Mehta rightly remarks, '...but he got the fame only as a short story writer. His effects in all his literary creativity were proved in short stories. The variety .....Story. His stories were life source/ giving to Gujarati narrative fiction.'

It was the time when Dumketu's short story takes to the stage with his publication of *Tankta Mandal-I* story form was in the stage of formation, very few writers as Malaynil, Dhansukhlal Mehta or K.M. Munshi with limited works and scope. They were intentionally written and are not finished works except for the possibilities that we see in case of 'Govalani', but the tone was set and Jayant Pathak poetically marks the entry of the greatest of writer as:

Yet the stories of the times try to cling to motives/ intentions leaving behind the structure; there is no proportion in its limbs, its advance is bumpy like a stream running down the mountain region for the first time, it is not steady (plain) smooth, from the first cheep ring of a newly for baby bird we get a slight faint echo of the sound and higher flight in

future, and this intention can be realized as reality in the third decade of this century in 1926 with the publication of the first collection of Dhumketu, . It has the same importance as *Saraswati Chandra* or *Kusumbala* in the field of short story and for the first time of profound and knowledgeable man in art of story comes with extraordinary stories, and leaves behind not the moment eternal and permanent streams of light. (J. Pathak, 54)

Dr. Jayant Mehta who established 'Shantidas' as the first Gujarati short story in his *Toonki Varta Ek Durchan* marks that not only that the publication of *Tankha Mandal* will ever be remembered, but it widened the horizons of the limited region of short story and that it was established as an independent form of art, going back to the endeavours of the past he says:

Before Dhumketu, short story mainly depicted husband-wife or very common episodes of lovers or love triangles, the same city life, educated heroes and heroine and social problems related to higher as well as middle class and there was no variety in the discourse. And further the new emotions drew the attention of the writers of the age towards villages, backward, suppressed and marginal classes. The presentation of village life and lower classes in the first collections the indication of this new directions, The influence of the reflection of

naturalism in Russian Comet Short Story can also be marked for the first time blaze in Dhumketu's stories.(J. Mehta, 22 )

Dhumketu established himself as a short story writer with very first collection as a conscious artist. He himself critiques the short story form in his prefaces to his various collection and has attempted to define short story to establish it as an independent form of art, though his critique has been critiqued as his not following his own theory, but it is suggestive of his consciousness as a practitioner of Short Story and the contribution that he was making in the early phase of development of short story.

A short story of writer moves in a small circle. So can not impression. His space is limited. Shorter form of novel is short story. This and many such myths are now matter of past. But we need to be alert that a new myth that short story has nothing to say should not come up/develop. In fact, today the short story has lots to tell. It has its own way to narrate. If it is telling something, then the fact is that it doesn't tell anything. The soul of the soul of short story is the technique of presenting Dhwani. Sound could be in a word, His literary activities can be dated back to 1920 with some short stories collected later anthologies *Arashesh* and *Parishesh* but at times it can be in between two sentences, or it can simply in the air that the writer creates, and many a times in his silence- the silence in absence of sound- sound could also be there. 'and then,...' and the short story would

write, ' and then...,and the short story writer would write, ' and then...and would write many a things in not writing it... (Dhumketu, 3)

Turning to his works we mark that he comes with novel characters, settings, narration and realism close to naturalism in a wider range. His literary activities can be dated back to 1920s with some short stories collected in *Avashesh* and *Parishesh*, but the real recognition came with 'Post office' first published in the issue of Sahitya Academy, 1923 titled as 'Malelu', later known as 'post office'. After that he contributed to many varied periodicals like *Gujarat*, *Narchetan*, *Sahitya*, *Vishvamisra*, *Garvi Gujarat*, *Rangbhoomi*, *Vismi saadi*, etc. to come out with his first anthology *Tankha Mamdal-I* in 1926. 'Post Office' the first story in the *Tankha Mandal-I* has been translated in many a language and could find a place in *Ten Tales* to gain the attention globally. Dhunketu characters, illiterate, poor; rustic; from the lowest caste and creeds, like Ali dosho—a hunter Badrinath, Anandand Mohan, Vaghji, Bansi Lakshmi, Kalu, Ratno, Mirani, Kunti, Premavati Jummo Bhisti Rasik, Gulab-bhabhi, Nanbho, Kanku-Narsi, etc, they are hunters, beggars, artists, cobblers, prostitutes, post an, labourers, weavers, drummers, employees, farmers, vegetable sellers, police, Mukhis, masters, servants but what is common about them is they always respond to their heart, they are human and self-sacrificing, true to their extent to grow from it as is the case with Ali Dosa, the hunter and the post master or to places as Bhaiyadada who gives up his life

not able to give up his life long acquaintances with his dwelling and 'Janmabhoomi No Tyag' where the cobbler's attainment to the tree under which he sat are examples of their human qualities they exist with in the most wretched state. When Dhumketu in his autobiography *Jivanrang* states that; 'I write for myself as much as I write for others', speaks of his vision of life that is reflected in his short story. Basically his short story come with tragic undercurrent though we find almost all different rasas, in his wide range of short stories, as Jayant Mehta opines:

Studying Dhumketus' collection we realize that there is a great variety in that his themes, characters, art of characterization, background, and suspense of the story. And he has written short story with shringar, Vir, Karun, Hasya, Adbhoot, etc. But in comparison to his short story with serious subjects his humour-saline stories are weaker. 'Ek Toonki Varta', 'Parker Pen', 'Musaari', 'Khasdanni shanta', 'Ek Mahaprayunu chhaya Chitra', 'Ek Durdin', 'Kesri Dalno nayak', 'Adarsh Dholiyo' and the likes in *Tankha Mandal* stories and 'Navo kavi', 'Hata Tya ne Tya,' (*Parishesh*) 'Ek Vichitra Anubhav' (*Vanchhaya*) and other such Humorous and satirical stories lack in the light of creativity achieved.(18)

The settlings and the description of nature too have a wide range and effect. Most of the settings and background as his character are from his life experience. His early life was spend in a small place Virpur he had travelled to

Himaliyas (North India), first half his life was spent in small town places, like Porbandar, Junagadh and Gondal and the later half in Ahmedabad. All this early experiences forms the best part of his creative output that suggests his bias with the village life. That is often juxtaposed against the mechanical urban life. 'Bhaiyaduda') is which one well of his best stories is often criticized for the same aspect where he ends it so explicitly to not to have faith in the readers. A comment to add to his one more shortcoming with regards to his bias for the rural life as,

A few critics label him a creator that imbalances his short story is siding with the village idealism reveal this creator. A villager is always innocent and cultured, while an educated city bred is always selfish and stone hearted. The officers, Doctors, Clerks and literatures in the city are without feelings and whimsical. (I. Nayak 12)

But the merit out number the shortfalls with the master story teller who adds realism through characters and background that is largely the life experiences. The nature descriptions in 'Prutvi ane Swarga' (*Tankha Mandal-I*), 'Ek Ratri' (*Tankha Mandal-II*) and 'Ek Toonki Musafari', are good examples that are more poetic and add to the art of short story form. So is the detailing of village life that is so realistic. His stories open with descriptions that are

suggestive or are like preparing the ground and set the tone for the narration. 'The blue sky of late night was twinkling with stars like the sweet memories twinkle in human life.' ('Post Office') The 'sweet memories of human life' is central to the story which is employed in the background to add to the state of an old father in tatters craving for a letter from her daughter.

One of the best designed story, 'Ek Toonki Musafari', opens with the description of the monsoon in the small desert of Kutchh and narrates hardships to reach the railway station are romantic enough to capture and imagination and engulf the reader to meet Kalu who too is a traveller in life, carrying ahead with no hope and leaves the rest of his life journey at the mercy of almighty working with Deva Rawal his master who has married the beloved of Kalu, and is spoken now as the sister by Kalu. Both the first paragraph that narrates the narrator situation which is a natural calamity and they accept it, runs parallel to Kalus life who too accepts the tragic outcome of his affair to give a name to their relation to reach his end in life! The story opens thus:

Once this servant of yours had once been trapped in the monsoon, and then what ever he suffered, he has guard as a poor man would safe guard jewel. It was the fate of the servant to visit a village near the small Rann of Kutchh. (on reaching there) The rain pored down heavily. And it rained continuously exactly for a

week that we could not step out of the village. It was water, water every where around the village; and in a desert the water seemed to wave like a lake: If we come out the village the scene was like that of a big ocean to your sight. Spent a week to get out of this island. The station was fourteen miles ahead; and that too the trains had not started, so another 20 miles to walk. Somehow we convinced Deva Rawal and he agreed to come with a came up to the station. And the journey after that would be taken and after that would be we relied on the sky (Dhumketu 26)

Dhumketu's characters can not be evaluated applying logic or in other words they might not behave rationally, what is central to them is the value in life and each that every character is wedded to. They could be helpless man or woman, in dire poverty or on the margins but they live and die with all aspirations, hope, sacrifice wedded to the human aspect which gives them the space in literature and life. Juma Bhisti loves his buffalo, Mirani adopts kankus child, Kalu could face the reality of life, Kunti, a prostitute and a mother, Dhana Bhagat dying with a smile on his face, anonymous Lady ('Jivannu Prabhat') love for the sake of love and many more characters are with 'tankha', a sparks that Dhumketu comes with in every common people; Dhumketu relied much on the incidence and shaped the short story form for further experiments in times to come.



## Local Colour: Revival of Folk Literature

**Zaverchand Meghani** (1896-1947), a major writer, researcher and a journalist is the representative writer of the age (*yug*) that was influenced by Gandhi and nationalistic zeal. He is contemporary of Dhumketu and Dwiref. His greatest contribution is recording and compiling the oral folk literature of Kathiawar people (Saurashtra region i.e. West south Gujarat) and give it a written form. All his life (the last 25 years) were devoted as the editor of the daily *Saurashtra* (1922) and later *Phoolchhab* (1932-45) publishing *Sorathni Rasdhar*, folk songs, critical works on folk literature, travelogues, diary, and poetry, short stories and novels (fourteen), Drama (translations-4), Biography and historical essays. He has a major contribution to prose, and the oral presentation of the folk tales and songs documented by him was a major project to revive literature and awaken the masses with the self pride and national spirit. A committed socialist and the bard of the bard could truly put into practice the Gandhian call to write in a language that the last man in the society understood. For which he was tirelessly engaged in field work meeting real life last generation of people who lived and cherished and kept alive the traditions and culture to remind us of the Irish literary revivalists. The painstaking efforts and the output can be thought of as:

Meghani researched, travelled and listened to the stories, the legends, the folk tales, folk lore and songs from the bards in the court, common people, old and young man and women folk and compiled *Sorathi Baharvatia* (outlaws of Sorath), *Doshimani vato*, *Saurashtra in Rasdhar* Vol. I-V, *Dadajini Vato*, *Sorathi Sant*, (1928) *Sorathi Git Kathao* (1931) *Puratan jyot*, (1938) *Rang Chhe Barot* (1945).

The above mentioned works of folk literature were retelling the tales he had heard in the same rustic Gujarati and shaped them for the written text. He shaped the long tales in oral tradition to read like stories when written but keeping to the oral tradition. In doing so, his stories read like short stories. Along with this realised work he continued with his creative short stories that he wrote being the editor of *Saurashtra* and *Phoolchhab*. (B. Patel, 151)

Meghani began his literary writings with *Kurbani ni kathao* (1922) a collection written with the influence of Tagore's *Katha-o-Kahani* with a view to introduce the Indian Culture. The influence of Gandhi, Tagore and social idealism shaped his literary activities to bring about a long lasting effect on Gujarati literature which for the first time recognizes the long wage, literature and people as a whole to the main stream.

Much like in Dumketu, emotion is central in Meghani too, but where he surpasses is in his use of language that was very well captured by the researcher- Meghani personally listening to the folk all over Saurashtra. He comes out best with his bringing alive the splendors of the past in his saints and outlaws, but this was to train him for the original/ creative short story, which began in 1931 onwards to 1935 between which he published four anthologies *Chit na Angara-1* (1931), *Chit na Abngara-II* (1933), *Apana Umbarma* (1932), *Dariyaparna Bahavatia* (1932) *Vartaman Yug*, *Nev Baharvatia* (1932), *Jel office in Bari* (1934), *Pratimao* (1934) *Palakara* (1935), *Dhoop Chhaya* (1935). All the short stories were collected in *Meghani in Navalikao- I & II* (1942). *Vilopan* (1946) was his last collection. There are sixty two stories in all.

Many of his short stories as, 'Sadubha', 'Vilopan', 'Shikar', 'Garas Mate', 'Me Tamaro vesh paheryo', and all the short stories from *Jelni Barimathi* are based on real-life. They more or less resemble his style in *Sorathni Rasdhar*. Fifteen short stories from *Pratimao* and *Palkala* are based on English films are one more way of transforming the audio-visual medium to words as he had already done in case of folk literature. But they are not his original creation which is the only demerit, other wise they are well written stories *Dariya Paarna Baharvatia* is also an experiment in transformation of form. The source of these four stories is *The*

*Outlaws of Modern Days* by Aeston Woolf based on his real out laws. It is not translation but transformation. In Vilopan we can trace the development of the short story form in case of short stories. 'Abhimanyu', 'Dhusalal Thutho' and 'Maro Balooobhai', does succeed in projecting the minds of the characters though it comes out as a satire on the satyagrahis. The short stories set in the contemporary homes as, 'Maro vank Nathi' 'Bhale Gadi Modi Thai' and 'Kadedat, are more realistic to present the erudition of human values in the post world war years. While 'padbhrashts' Yatra' , Chandi' and Chamanni Vahu project the social tangles, customs and the characters that are either the victims as in Manchha in Suvavad and Keshubapa nu karap' or some who face it bravely as the cases in 'Ladko Randapo', Anant ni Bahen' or 'Loka chharna Danar Sane' etc.

Among the best of his short stories, 'Vahu Ane Godo', 'Sadashiv Tapali', 'Thakar Lekha Leshe', 'Burai na Diwar Parthi', 'Bablie' 'Rang Bagadyo', and 'Jatra' are often regarded as well structured works that contributed to the short story form as a whole. 'Vahu ane Ghodo' is a story divided in six sections and Meghani elaborates the descriptions for e.g. of the horse or the early fanciful days of Tara but it in-depth takes us to the realms of her fancies and dreams, to prove most crucial in the later development of the story resulting into a tragedy. Vijay Shashtri too takes note of the work as the creation on the artistic insight.

At this stage, it is only the horse of Prataprai in the fanciful mind of Tara, not the house or husband. And after that there are some thirty lines to describe Tara's fancy in the beauty and of the horse. Our critics have fallen in to custom of criticizing the detail descriptions, but here though the thirty lines are more descriptions yet it was very important to twist the attraction for horse with Tara. Meghani knew that the mentality of Tara should not look accidental. (Y. Shukla, 181)

The title 'Vahu ane Ghodo' suggests that the story draws parallel with the state of the horse and the wife (daughter in-law) in the house of Prataprai, a wealthy businessman. Right from the opening to the end the story is structured to juxtaposed the false fantastic image of the wealthy house against the crude decadence reality that runs parallel in case of the horse and the women in the house. The story is a first person narration by Tara, the protagonist whose situation is more tragic then the horse that is sold when she questions that why don't they do away with man as horses, the horse lucky to escape the inhuman, indifferent treatment in the house. 'Vahu ane Ghodo' can also be read as a progressive text that projects class disparity.

'Sadashiv Tapali' too is a story reflecting the orthodox upper class Brahmins. Sadashiv, the post man is orphan a character who is an out-caste,

because he is hard working and doing manual work regarded under status for a high cast community.

Thus Meghani's voluminous work in documenting and writing the folk literature and his contribution as a representative poet of the times has not given much scope to the writers to practice develop or contribute much to the short story form, his contemporary Dhumketu was mastering the form while, Ramanlal Desai, Gunvantrai Acharya, and Chunilal Shah, the three major novelist in the Gandhian era also contributed to the short story form but were more successful as novelist. Their works are mainly the projection of middle class man and their problems. Other writers as Tarachand Adalja and Gokuldas Raichura wrote stories based on the folk tales. While Indulal Yagnik has a collection *Kumarna Striratno*, that deals with the woman's life and experience.

1930's the third decade is distinct for the advent new poets Sundaram and Umashankar Joshi. They were both influenced by Freud, Marx and Gandhi and were progressive writers. Though their idealism does not affect their works, the influence of the age did lead them to mainly deal with the social issues. Both poets at heart could contribute to project the characters as individuals and working of their subconscious mind. They are more experimentative to polish the short story form with their poetic language. Both of them had the rural up

bringing to give them a direct experience of the rural as well as urban life, which resulted in realistic presentation. Sundaram and Umashankar who wrote short story under the pennames 'Trishul' and 'Vasuki', respectively are no more known by those names as in the case of Malaynil, Dhumketu, Dwiref and others but are better known as poets.

### **The Progressive Shift**

Most of the writers all over India were under the under Gandhian influence during thirties. Alongside the Gandhian whirlwind there emerged the progressive writing that had the impulse to struggle against the rise of fascism and accounts of the subjected working class that overlapped with the Gandhian economical and political thoughts and concerns with spiritual vein. Mulkraj Anand in his 'Many Languages but One Literature' in *Makers of Indian Literature* gives a brief account and influence of the progressive writers in Gujarati as:

In Gujarati writings also, the progressive writers' manifesto effected change from the historical romances of K.M. Munshi moving from the feudal monarchy of Chalukya period to lower middle households. With the impact of Gandhism in Gujarat,

Ramanlal Desai popularised Gandhi's experiments with truth, non-violence, civil disobedience, rural upliftment and abolition of untouchability in his fiction. Like the English poets, Auden, Spencer and Day Lewis who reacted against fascism, poets live Umashankar Joshi used free verse to bring about the awareness against fascism. (Narsimhaihah, 41)

**Tribuvan Purushottam Luhar: 'Sundaram'**, (1908-1911), is often compared with his contemporary and companion writer, Umashankar Joshi for his literary contributions. Sundaram, the poet marks his name as a critic, essays, translator, short story writer, travel writing and a seeker. His contribution to short story form during 1930 to 1945 is immense in terms of his experimentation as a progressive writer to bring in the Freudian, social, Gandhian influence to develop the short story form from romantic realism to realistic and naturalistic. Though remembered as a great poet, and has not written many short stories as compared to his predecessors, his short stories leave their mark as the memorable short stories of his times.

Sundaram has written four collections, namely *Hirakani Bijivate'* (1938), *Kholki and Nagarika* (1939), *Piyasi* (1940) and *Unnayan* (1945) in his first phase before the Independence and his turning towards Shri Aurobindo's *Purnyog*. Later



in 1978 he published *Tarini* a collection of 30 stories of which 21 stories were written in 1930's. In all he has written sixty stories.

The first phase stories written under the pen name 'Trishul' comes with stories like 'Kholki', 'Maja Vela nu Mrutyu', 'Mane Khole', 'Gopi', 'Min Piyasi Nagrika', 'Punamdi' and many more that give a major shift and shock with its presentation of sensual and sexual aspects that influence the action and events. He has contributed by presenting the sub conscious of the characters with his mastery of telling a story.

More than Marx or Gandhi it is Freudian psychoanalysis to analyze the sexual behaviour comes fore to bring about a big shift in the short story form. The writers were not bold enough well versed or at times neglected the inner desires in a man due to social sting. *Kholki ane Nagarika* or *Minpiasi* are the collections could not be thought of or would have been regarded as vulgar or obscene.

All his characters have a quest as all human beings very naturally have, be it physical, material or spiritual and set against the odds the writer with out interfering with the given set presents it very naturally for the readers to sympathise with the characters who come from the common or lower class. He

narrates in a serious tone as with 'Gopi', 'Kholki' 'Min Piyasi', 'Asha', 'Kutra' (later renamed 'Lal Mogro') and many more or can set to ironical tone as in 'Nagrika', Maja Velanu Mrutyu', Pekadno pravasi' 'Prasadjini Bech', 'Punamadi', 'Halavine Pivi' and many others. As a socialist we mark the class distinctions in almost all his stories. The characters suffer because of the poverty, the social customs, urbanization blind faiths, hypocrisy, and many other social and economical problems. He presents the rural and the urban life with a wide range of characters from the beggar to the business class.

Sundam's first short story 'Gopi' (1931) is about Gopi, a smart dancer, whose father is a drummer. The father in his greed to earn more and more brings a tragic end to the story with 'Gopi' falling down unconscious (or may be dead?) The very life giving and bread earning art befalls as their tragedy; 'Min Piyasi' (Thirsty Fish) is also similar story of an old man who has to leave his village because of his gambler son. The old man a folk singer, who used to sing bhajans (devotional songs) devotionally for the self satisfaction in the village, is made use of in the city by his son to eek out their living. The contrast that is viewed by the tragic figure of the old man who is forced to sing before the hypocritical class in the lights at night for the sake of money is presented very realistically. A scene

where the old man is trying to sleep under the sky also is done artistically in 'Min Piyasi':

The Old man removed his turban off his head. Spreading the cloth that was spread for begging laid on side and placed the turban under the head. His sight met the telephone pole nearby. Little further an electric bulb was glowing. (Sheth 104)

It is the poet at work to be sensitive in drawing out the contrast between the clear sky in a village and telephone poles and street lights that symbolize the urban life. The story ends in death of the old man as in case of Gopi in 'Gopi' but here it is the son's greed that results in the tragedy.

'Kholki' is remarkable as a story for many reasons, not just the boldness in its sexual and sensual presentation. It is a story of a young child widow Chanda, remarried to middle aged Bhiya. The local is a village and the story opens with Bhiya coming to Chanda's village for a condolence and visits her house. The narrator is Chanda, who narrates every moment with her view point. The writer does not interfere through out to make the settling, the characters and action are so natural that not once does Chanda come out with an ill remark or dislike about disturbing and disgusting things and action and its description. She is part of the local and takes things as naturally as one would. She wins the sympathy of

the readers' right from the beginning. The story opens with the arrival of Bijya and Chanda trying to recognize him among many others in the group of men, peeping through a window, from upstairs. The innocent aspiring young girl to glimpse at all the coarse, ugly and brutal aspects in the husband that are symbolic of sensuality as, when Bhabhi, the experienced woman marks Bhiya as:

Meanwhile my *bhabhi* came upstairs carrying her son on her waist and asked, "Why, Chandaba what are you looking at stealthily?" I replied, "Nothing". So bhabhi said, "Why nothing? You of course were staring thus at your husband who has come. Could you recognise him?" I replied, "O, damn it! You are adding fuel to the already burning fire". "Come I'll shoe you". With that she opened the window. The men were engaged in their talks so they did not notice us. Pointing her finger, she marked, "See that is your husband". I asked, "Who?" she said, "See, the one with Adam's apple which looks as big as a dry date. Yes, see...see! One who is spitting". I saw that he coughed and took out a big gob of phlegm and covered it with soil with his feet. A dog came near him wagging its tail. He hit it with the toe of his shoe saying, "Move away, you damn thing!" The dog yelped and ran away. So, all men laughed. (Mehta, 2007, 100)

The story proceeds with all these unpleasant actions, words and movements that are sensuous. The story ends with the secret meeting of Chanda and Bhiya, at a neighbour's house. Every posture of Bhiya is so disgusting in his

smoking, coughing, kicking the turban; standing at the window and in the end giving a jerk to Chanda to turn her to his side. The last dialogue ends the story with a jerk, 'Turn this side you, Khalki!' is the heights to end the story so abruptly.

'Ucharta Chhoru' ('Narsinh') is also one such story that is progressive enough to discuss the homosexual child abuse on Narsinh a hotel boy. It is a story ahead of its times.

'Nagrika', in contrast to 'Kholki', is a story of an educated, urban girl who is married to the person wedded to the Gandhian ideals. Here too Nagrika, the heroine, is the narrator to unfold her state in marrying a person blind as following the ideas and not able to understand the wants of the newly wed bride. He reads from Kalidasa to Nagrika who can not stand it and falls asleep. It is the sophistication which is in striking contrast with 'Kholki's' sensualities that we sympathise with the heroine. The narrator Chanda had nothing to react but here it is an educated girl who suffers because she can reason out, but the state of both Chanda and Nagrika are the same in their disparities.

'Maja Velanu Mrutyu' is a master piece to create a character of an old man who has reached his end (as the title itself exposes before our reading the story –

(‘Maja Vela’s death’). Maja Vela the head of the big family is projected as a dignified character loving and caring, sitting with his grand sons as the vice-chancellor of the ancient university’, a beggar class old man who has lived his life with full satisfaction and yet able to live life satisfying his senses could rob, or murder in his past thinks of large family and his faith in of his grandsons. The satisfaction that he dies with, the name of goddess he utters encircled with the children and family of thirty members, present the magnanimity of the old man in dire poverty. It is once again a very realistic presentation of the state of the beggar class peasant on the footpath, which wins our sympathy without any suggestion by the writer.

In most of the stories, the central characters of Sundaram are women and their unspeakable condition. He restricts to give solutions or even comment to show his maturity as a short story writer and his faith in the readers no more needs any explanations to shape the short stories. ‘Pani’ and ‘Punamadi’ are the stories titled after the names of the heroines as in the case with ‘Nagarika’

Pani’s plight is the inhuman husband and suffers till the end and finally commits suicide. It is an ironic narration. ‘Punamdi’ too is ironic but a narration in lighter tone of an orphan girl married to a mismatch. The marriage ends the story, but the house hold of the narrator, Puni’s description, and the local that is

the village, merging in the city, are artistically done. The gradual physical; description and the attraction of the narrator, the bondage of narrators wife with Punmadi and the sub-conscious that results in giving a frame to story that doesn't much rely on events, expression or action. 'Maane Khole' too is a story of Shabu who meets her tragic fate due to her unmanly husband Megho.

'Pecardno Pravas' a good example of progressive trend, it brings forth the social disparity at its best where the clear divide of haves and have-nots is presented with the contrast between the young lot of people packed in a Pecard car and on the other side and the filthy, ugly world outside. Vipul the odd man out in the Pecard is the mediator. The story opens with the costly Pecard wheels swiftly rolling out of the posh compound. The striking contrast is central but the tone is light enough to roll the narration as swiftly as Pecard initially and as they proceed the satiric tone too surfaces. As the Pecard is on the road, we mark the first remark:

Pecard did not exhaust a lot of fumes behind. But inside it was like the waves of pool of perfume and colours. The flower vase on both side doors were decorated with beautiful flowers. The different scents of toilets, Puff powder and hair oil was layered as if competing in a market. And the same competition was on the shine and pleasing faces. The smiles flowing like the springs, and the sparkling

white teeth that showed when they smile, glittering ear rings swinging on the rosy earbobs... (Dalal 94)

The pleasant perfumed, youthful and glittering atmosphere is to present it in the contrast to what they are cut off with, that is life all around; the gutters, the beggars, fully slums, and the crude reality of material prosperity is that it can be achieved at the cost of depriving many is brought about by a simple scene where the short dialogue between the Pacard packs and the shoffer on their way back home.

“No, no we do not want to take that road.”

“Alright we will take another road”. Said Vipul in full consciousness. He knew that Pacard was locked and turned homewards.

All of them sitting inside spoke out: “Shoffer, take it from another road!”

“Yes, please! But...”

“No ifs and buts....”

“There is no other way. If possible...” (Dalal 105)

Suresh Dalal rightly comments on this creative aspect as a miracle to quote words of the writer in his preface to *Ketlik Vartao: Sundaram*:



It is the poet Sundaram and his sensitive heart could not stop himself to disturb the situation that turned as poetic in his prose. It is this conscious prose writing that we find the same quest of the poet.

*Tane Mei Jankhee*

(I have craved for you)

*Yugothi dhikhela prakhar Saharani taras*

(Like the thirst of heated Sahara since ages)(8)

**Umashankar Joshi** (1911-1988) a towering personality who served the academic world of India as the Vice Chancellor, Gujarat University (1969-73), presided over the 24 meet of Gujarat Sahitya Academy and was elected the President, 1978 to 1982 he was the President, Sahitya Academy, Delhi; was the Vice Chancellor, Vishwabharti (Shantiniketan). He also travelled around Asia, America, and Europe to write four travelogues on, he has to his name some fifteen collections of critical articles, Biographies and character sketches, essays. *Goshthi* (1951) with 22 essays and *Ughadi Bari* (1959) with 91 personal essays are written the window of the mind open to a wide range of subject. He has also contributed to drama form with three collections of one act plays and translated Euripides's play, and above all ten collections of poetry that is evident of his poetic flow for five decades. He has been awarded eight national and

international awards including Jyanpith Award (1986) for his poetry collection *Nithith*. As a short story writer he published three collections *Shravani Melo* (1937), *Trran Ardhu Be* (1938) and *Antarai* (1947), under the pseudonym 'Vasuki'. As an experimentative short story writer, his statement (instead of preface) to *Shravani Melo* speaks of him as a conscious artist to employ the style and artistic devices to mould the short story form. He states:

The only statement I have to make is that the stories published under pen name 'Vasuki' are by the under signer. Individual poems and one-act plays were written with my name so even if the short stories are published in that way, some may feel that why am I pocking my nose in all the literary forms; this imagined fear made me borrow or pseudonym to go on...I began writing Short Story for the sake of a hobby to make experiments with different literary forms and continued with the habit of experimentation with structure and presentation in different stories.

At places it is possible that the story may seem to be influenced by personal experience. Till the time we do not transform that personal experience to universal experience it hardly can research the state of artifice. (iv)

Umashankar a prolific writer has many similarities with Sundaram. They are both primarily poets and wrote short stories in the same phase along with so many different literary forms. Umashankar responded to the Gandhian call in 1930 to leave his higher education half way and joined the *Satyagraha* and went to jail. We can mark the Gandhian, Socialist progressive and Freudian influence in his short stories is as alike in the case of Sundaram. Umashankar has a well balanced the blend of romanticism and realism to present the condition of man and woman. He could present the working sub conscious. The physical reality was projected with psychological approach.

‘Paglino Padanar’ written in 1935, the first story in the anthology *Shravani Melo* is about a yearning old man, Shantaram, for a grand son. The gradual mental deterioration of the old man after the birth of the third, fourth and the fifth daughter to Kisan’s (his son) Wife, view of a grim future of his family line, comparison with the neighbour’s happiness to have an only daughter ‘Joyti’ among five sons add to his tress. His irritation in response to Joyti’s song a well treated case of psychoanalysis.

The story moves ahead to disturb his state of mind with Joyti making fool of him at the time of one more birth of girl child:

After this, Shantaram's situation worsened. It appeared as if god was conspiring to spoil the old man's last days. Now the old man had lost all his etiquette in speech also. He would bluntly tell Kishan's wife, "You inauspicious blot! Your labours are barren. The by passers would shut their ears. Some would instigate the old man saying, "Kaka, is it in our hands to make the immortal belt of the family lineage?" then Shantaram would snap back, " yes, yes, I know everything. I have seen enough summers and winters! How did Girdhar get a son after six, six daughters? Is that not the one exchanged with that fair *Thakardi*? Why do you make me open my mouth? Look at his complexion, dark as black ink .Look at his facial features! Is there any resemblance to Girdhar? Do you want to dig out every thing from me now? We don't want to do this and that is why you feel like pointing finger at our deficiencies us? It happens, Bhai, happens!" (K. Mehta, 2006, 94)

The writer intensifies the depression of Shantaram's mind by his giving up all the hope of seeing the face of a grandson to an extent that people feared the he would really turn mad if someone gave him the news of the birth of a girl child.

The end of the story is so well worked out not to add to it's catastrophe but to the form that achieved such structure after two decades in 'new' short story. The old man was on the death bed and at the same time Kisan's wife too

has the labour pain. Both the birth and death occur simultaneously with Shantaram dying without seeing the face of the grand son or believing the news.

The moving end of the story is worked out artistically thus:

The old man was nearly ready for his last rites. All present sat stuck. Someone from the room asked for four experienced ladies to come in. Someone murmured, "Why! Is Kishan's wife not well?"

The *Vaid* sat there feeling Shantaram's pulse, "stopped!" The moment the *Vaid* was saying so, a woman gave the good news, "*Ramji!* Kishan's wife delivered a boy!"

It is said that the irretic pulse in Shantaram's hand steadied for a while and he incoherently spoke... "Why.... 'am dying, why is the world making fun now?"

Many must have heard of the statements below in the mixed atmosphere of joy and sorrow, "see his fortune, fulfilled the old man has gone satisfied!" somebody was heard. Someone else said, "the old man has changed his body *bhai!* He has shifted from the front room to the back room. Just that!" (K. Mehta, 2006, 96)

'Mari Champano Var', a trend setter in psychoanalytic depiction, is a well structured a story of Laxmi, a young widow with a daughter, Champa. Laxmi brings her up to a marriageable age with all dignity. The writer unfolds the

subconscious mind and mould of Laxmi when she marries Champa to Punamlal, a widower of her friend, and her relationship with the son in-law of her age, there is no trace of sensuality, distortion or suspicion in her unconscious and innocent affection towards her Champa's husband (also the title). The story ends with the death of Champa's husband due to some illness when Champa was carrying. 'Laxmi was widowed the second time': a simple statement makes the reality concrete. Champa in the end gives birth to a girl child and the unending circle of life brings the end to a perfectly finished work with the final line, 'And Champa, to avenge the mother, was bringing up the baby with twofold love.'

As Vijay Shastri's quotes Chunilal Madia on the uniqueness of this masterpiece as his success in experimentation with the form that:

Just as even if Dhumketu would not have written 'Somi Varta' (the hundredth Story) and would have just written two to four stories as 'Atmana Ansu' in *Tanka-1*, he would have been considered a short story writer, in the same way even if Umashankar had written only a few stories as, 'Lohi Tarasyo' or 'Mari Champno Var' or 'Paglino Padnar', he would have acclaimed got a place as successful story writer. (Shastri 159)

'Shravani Melo' the title story reads as a lyric in first half with the folk fair fun where young hearts are at the top of their ecstasies in music and marry go

rounds, a world of romance. Their hearts throbbing in the monsoon mood of romance, it's a fair where they come single and leave as couples. Umashankar has worked marvel with the description of the nature, the fair, the young man and woman and the language of the local. In focus is the meeting of eyes of Ambi and Devo who too are at the top of the world as in the marriage go round but down they role to the crude realities of village life where Deva's family and there ancestral land are under the debt of a sheriff. The writer juxtaposes the fantasy and reality without elaborating it where in the end Deva lends up in the prison for attacking Virchan the Sheriff. Lovers who hand parted top with a promise to meet in the next monsoon fair do meet but at the fair but:

The next Shravan, Ambi stood by Sona and stared blank at the huge wheels going round.

And, Devo? In the state prison, may be he too must been yoked in place of bullocks and going round and round, looking at the speed of the wheel, refreshing the memories of last years fair. (U. Joshi, 1994, 139)

May be it is the influence of the times to come up with the characters, language the local and issues but the poetic language and narration as well as the structure of the story proves that art surpasses all the issues and influences.

‘Shravani Melo’ presents life as a whole, where joys and sorrows exist side by side.

‘Parabadia’, ‘Shesh Manvi’, ‘Hilli’, ‘Lohitarasyo’, ‘Cheloo Chhanu’ are developed to unfold and perceive the subconscious mind from very simple incidents or actions. ‘Hilli’ and ‘Be Behno’ are good examples where Hilli an orphan girl brought up in a temple by a Babaji ends with the very words of Babaji that ‘you are your mother’ and make meaning in case of her own girl child’s care.

‘Tarang’ (*Visamo*) is regarded as the seed of modern stories where the dialogue between Mohan and Ajit is not factual but creation of unconscious. The fear and guilt of Ajit in having relation with a dead friend’s wife Sayunkta is compared and developed psychologically.

‘Chhhakinu Bhoot’ is also one such mystifying story of a poor carpenter. Amitha, who is gradually regarded as a man of miracle by flock after he repaired a mill but he too could not reason it out as to how it all happened and if he wanted to clarify no one believed the truth. The writer merges fact and fiction that brings about the fall of Amtha as his miracle doesn’t work in case of the illness of his son.



'Pratimadevi' is a meeting of old lovers after experiencing life in different wakes. Its well structured story that also ends with a sting, compact and close ended, that reminds the reader of Maupassant or O. Henry. Vijay Shashtri takes note of it as:

Guy De Maupassant and O. Henry gave well structured, compact, close-knit, effective incidents and striking statement in the end to the world of short story. The problem that is put forward in the beginning ought to be solved in the end. The experiment of 'It does not click'..is rarely found in their works...you get the key to all the entangles by the end of the story. There is no loose end or open-end... Examining Umashankar's 'Pratimadevy' we are reminded of this, even if Umashankar accepts it or not. (Shashtri, 195)

'Lili Vadi' is also a tragic tale of Sukhla, who loses his mother's love due to her affair with Karan. The sketch of Gulabdi and her extra martial relation and Sukhla's state of mind and his pathetic condition is projected with bare minimum words.

In 'Tran Ardhu Be' the writer is more rational than sentimental. A story is set in lighter tone with three characters two women friends and one man who complete the love triangle. Their accidental meeting at the photo studio and how

to take the snap is presented. The photographer's physical solution which is of no importance as the real problem is of the emotions.

Umashankar's fairs, sheds, locale and language that could artistically heighten the personal to universal were a major contribution to influence the writers to come with their regional writings.

### **The Regional Writers:**

The fourth decade of twentieth century and the last decade of pre-Independence Gujarati literature can entirely be thought of as the era of regional writing with Pannalal Patel, Ishwar Petlikar, Chunnilal Madia and Pitambar Patel.. With Dhumketu Meghani, Gandhi, Umashankar and Sundram's contribution to bring in the rustic local through the regional language and character as conscious creative writer it was time ripe for a writers as Panalal, Pellikar and Madia to exploit the regional life that they had lived and observed so closely to make it far the main stream literature.

**Pannalal Patel** (1912-1980), a classmate of Umashankar Joshi, but could not have higher education and worked as Factory worker and Clerk. He was a born story teller. With Sundaram's advice he turned to prose. His contribution to novel as well as short story is immense with his masterpiece novels *Malela Jiv*

(1941) and Jyanpith awarded *Manvini Bhavai* (1947). He has published 54 novels and 26 short story collections of which *Sukh Dukh na Sathi* (1940), *Jindagi na khel* (1940), *Jiva Dhand* (1941), *Lakhchordsi* (1944), *Panetar na Rang* (1946) are his Pre-Independence short story collections.

Pannalal's locale is (birth place-Mandli, North Gujarat region, now in Rajasthan) which he calls 'Ishanio Desh' (north-east region). He brings to life the village life with his natural gift of 'telling' using all the techniques to come up with characters, dialogues, languages with local idioms to paint the realistic picture as a painter. It is his direct experience and involvement that contributed to evolve the regional type of writing to its finished form.

The major difference in Pannalal and his predecessors as Dhumketu, Umashankar, Sundaram and others who too portray the rural background, characters and life is well brought out by Jayant Pathak to mark the key to success in Pannalal as:

What is the key to success in Pannalal's short stories? It is his understanding of life and his power to mould it in to art. He has seen Villages, and also the cities, but to realize the strength of a writer is not in giving such labels. Be it a Village or a city, stories are always found from the people who dwell in it. Pannalal's characters are from villages as well as from city. If we compare the stories of

Dhuketu with Pannalal's stories we at once can mark that the new writer does not see village from one angle. Pannalal's characters can not be seen as from village or city. If we say put this in a different way then: emotions of a person are the same everywhere. As Gulabdas's urban characters who are troubled in their love affairs, Pannalal's rural characters experience the same. The difference is in the setting and speech. The urban characters flirts in gardens or clubs while the character in a village would do it in a fair or a farm. The village characters are not uncultured. They are cultured ...we find colourful romance in Pannalal's world of fiction. The earlier short story writers presented social and economical and at times cultural problems of village life and looked at the village folk with pity. They are projected as if the people in a village live for bread and they have no other joys of life. Pannalal brings the village and its problems, but that they are inferior or pitiable is never the case. Even if there is a mountain of debt, the granaries at bottom, Pannalal's characters are merrily enjoying their life. The writer is not interested in social reforms or in preaching morals, what ever they are no less rich in rasas of life. At times we might feel that if today's village life changes then we might loose a lot many aesthetic things and how many a poems will be extinct. (Pathak 72-73)

Pannalal Patel's creative career began with 'Vanmala' the first story published in *Vanmala*. The next was 'Shethni Sharda' in *Phoolchhab* daily, whose editor then was Zaverchand Meghani. 'Kanku' was rejected by R.V. Pathak, the

editor of *Prasthan* with a remark of weak subject? But then he was unstoppable with 'Dhaninu Nak', *Sukh Dukhnu Sathi* and one after the other to establish himself as a major short story writer. It was in 1940 with his novel *Valamma* that he took to the wider canvass.

Pannalal likes to give twist to the emotions and swing the characters as a pendulum, a sea saw, where the base is romance and the two extremes are the fantasies and the ground realities. Women characters are central in almost all his works as is Raju in his epoch making work *Manvian Bhavai*. 'Vatrak ne Kanthe' brings forth this sensibility of woman's heart in Naval, the heroine, who has two husbands, one who has gone away and the other who is wanted by the police in murder of a person trying to abuse Naval. It is an extraordinary story where for the first time our moral contexts are jolted with the idea that a woman can love more than one person at a time. The two husbands are like the two banks of a river, where Naval can not decide whom she loves more. When both of them appear, dressed as saints, the problem is that only one can stay back and the other has to surrender. It is Naval to decide who should but she can not! The story ends with the lame murderer free and the innocent first husband sentenced for life. It is now that Naval feels that she loved her first husband; she leaves for

the riverbank to lament not even looking at the second husband, and the lame person leaves quietly.

‘Morlina Munga sur’ is also a story of lovers who accept reality. The two lovers, both married, meet at a fair and the woman who wants to go back to her lover is advised to wait for six months and mean while win over the husband and the in-laws by her work and love. So she buys a flute for the husband from the fair and behaves well with all and starts feeling comfortable with them all. In the next fair when the lover comes, divorcing his wife, the beloved says that she can not betray her husband! And in the end she gives the same piece of advice, to do as she did, ‘compromise with the wife....that’s the only remedy to all sorrows.’ The description of the fair, the dialogues of the lovers in their colloquial and minute detailing add to effect of telling. He does go into descriptions but that’s part of his narration that to detailing the incidents and characters who pass through it.

‘Maa’ is a good example of his oneness with the rural life. It is perhaps the shortest of his works with the deepest pathos and concrete image of a crude life full of hardships and struggle for existence where an old lady faces life and has to opt for brutality. It is a simple story of an old lady with a family of sons and grandsons living in utter poverty. The pregnant buffalo is to deliver a calf and

this result in to anxiety for the grand ma: whether it will be a he or a she calf. She is tormented at the thought of past experience where the buffalo would not allow to milk. It's only she who knows the cruelty and crudeness of life. Her sub cautious is marvellously projected by her unrest, her words, up and down movements and finally when the he-calf is born she gathers all her strength and throws the calf away. The disturbing end is more disturbing as to how it would have churned the heart of a woman who does this for her family being a 'mother'. 'Kanku' too is a story more realistic in presenting the sensual aspects without being snobby. It is about Kanku a widow who in the end submits to the Sheth, a money lender, who too is a widower although she could resist the temptation earlier.

'Sachi Gajyaninu Kapdu', 'Ale Nahi To Bele', 'Bala', 'Dharti Abhna Chhetta', 'Bhathini Vahu', 'Sukhdukhna Sathi' are among Pannalal's best works that deals with the joys and sorrows of the people living with nature of which; the writer, a born story teller, succeeds to create the finest works of art. He gives a free hand to the characters to act and speak in the natural course to present realistic picture, being part of that life. Pannalal is rightly regarded as the pioneer, prominent, and an artist par excellent in case of regional writings.

**Ishwar Petlikar** (1916-1983) is always clubbed with his contemporary Pannallal Patel. Jayant Pathak speaks of Pannallal as:

In literature just as we take Sundaram and Umashankar's name together, Pannalal and Petlikar's names are also taken together. There are many similarities in these writers. In both they depict villages in their works. Both enter the field at the same time and are established at once. Pannalal has the local and characters from the villages around Idar while Petlikar has the colour of Charotar region. Both have written novels along with short stories and were successful in both. Petlikar would have had a little more education than Pannalal but both were deprived of higher education. Both have close experience of villages and Villagers, and have a soft corner for it. (Pathak 73)

As mentioned above by Jayant Khatri, Petlikar was a great success with the publication of his first and the best novel *Janamtip* (1944) to give 26 novels and 11 short story collections of which *Tanavana* (1946) *Patlaina Pech* (1946), *Manta* (1947) are his pre-Independence collections. His locale is the Charotar, the region on the bank of Mahi in central Gujarat. Pannalal limits himself to personal and family relations while Petlikar goes on to deal within the social relations and thus he is regarded as a writer who writes for life sake but with the limitations. Most of the critics in *Petlikar: Shabd ane Shilp* refer to the limitations as regards the structure, reliance on the strength of the language and story or episode that he



has heard and not able to refrain himself on falling to long descriptions. His reformist zeal mars the effect of the short story that surface in most of his works.

Needless to say that 'Lohini Sagai' (1952) is his best short story and the writer too accepts it as his best written for a world short story competition organised by 'Herald Tribune' and was ranked first in Gujarat. It was his life experience to see his mother caring for the mentally retarded sister that he comes up with one of the most intensive emotions that one could think of in case of human relationship or blood relation. Amratkaki's heart can not accept sending the mentally retarded daughter, Mangu, to the care of mental hospital, knowing the circumstances that there was no other option, especially after her death, 'who would take care of her?', Is what shatters her existence and in the end when she finally is forced to leave her in the mental hospital to end the story at a point where the mother's affection stretches to eternity in Amrit kaki's turning insane with the cry. '...And in response the ...spectators, Amratkaki was converted to Mangu's caste.' It's a finished work, in other words, Manilal Patel in *Parishisth varta* puts it as:

The story ends with the triumph of mother's love. 'A short story has one and only one end' is what we say, can best be understood here. Any other end to "Lohini Sagai" will kill the soul of the story. (91)

The fifteen stories in the collection *Tanavana* were written in-between 1943-1946. Most of the stories depict the entangles (Tanavana) of social life like the man-woman, husband and wife and the influence of the human instincts that build, break, nurture or fracture these relationships at personal or social level is the common subject matter. Like Pannalal, Petlikar too has woman characters as central to these entangles. 'Astrini Jaat' Gunegar Koum', Chotho Mahino', 'Patnini Pasandgi', 'Be Chheda', 'Paradhin Stri' and 'Badalta pravah' are some such titles that also reflect the concerns. 'Tark Vantol' and 'Madhura Swapna' stand out to project the psychological consequence of the happenings on a person. In 'Madhura swapna', the sweet dreams of Sushila's, a young girl, youthful mind is deeply influenced by the event. The happening is the arrival of new neighbours, a couple Vinod and Shubhadra, where incidentally Vinod is also the name of Sushilas faience and is said to resemble him. The whole story is about identifying one Vinod in the other. It is well made a story that draws Sushila towards the neighbour but the distance is maintained and in the end she leaving for the in-laws house with least complications or complexions in her mind.

'Patlaina Pech' divided in two parts with the stories that has the frame of local in the same village with same characters reminds one of R.K. Narayan's

Swami and Friends that all the stories can be read as a whole. Here a village of Charotar region realistically presents the society and the people and their problems. Narendra, a social reformer who comes to the village facing different problems to solve their problems gives a scope to the writer to bring forth the orthodoxy, abuses, inertness, ignorance and also the socio political fabric. The collection is note worthy for its characterization. Chottabhai, Mukhi, Chunibhai, and Gamal are very well sketched. Here too the writer's missionary zeal is a barrier to develop the stories freely. Petlikar himself comments about his compulsions and reformist spirit in an interview where he states:

*Patidar* was one of the magazines that used to send my stories. The magazine was published for social reforms in which most of the articles were essay type. Shree Dayabhai Nagrik the editor's suggestion to the writers and contributors was to write a story with the same goal/motive that would interest the readers, which I did not know. But in the same phase I started sending my stories which were befitting the monthly and were accepted, and every month my stories were regularly published. I started writing in 1936. (R. Trivedi 10)

Petlikar wrote with a purpose to meet the demands of *Patidar* of which he became the editor in 1944. He is more realist and lesser romantic then Pannalal.

‘Mannata’ the story that goes by the title is a well structured story with a humorous incident but doesn’t allow you to laugh. The story is about taking the sweepers of a village to a town, to break the sweepers strike there. Those were also the days when war broke out. As a result the rumours that the villagers were taken to the front, works panic in case of the families and relatives. They take it as a curse of the Devas and kept vow to pacify the Gods and Goddesses. The story ends happily with the return of the near and dear ones and there are celebrations thinking as that their vows are answered! ‘Parda Pachhal’, ‘Vichhinu Mo’, ‘Visne Ek’, ‘Dasbhaini Udharas’, Thandu Yuddh, Moti Behen’, ‘Akhari Fesalo’ are among his notable short stories.

**Pitambar Patel** (1918- 1977) is one among the trio of regional writers Pannalal and Petlikar who has contributed to novel, short story, folk drama ‘Bhavai’, journalism, radio and film production. He belongs to the north Gujarat region of Pannalal and unlike Pannalal and Petlikar has his higher education up to post graduation (1942). He too wrote under the Gandhian influence and his concern is social reform and social change through, realistic presentation of north Gujarat locale. He has eleven short story collections to his name of which *Vagadana Phool* was the only one to be published before the Independence.

**Chunilal Madia** (1922-1968) is one more regional writer who is more experimentative and belongs to the Saurashtra region that of Meghani. He has written more than two hundred stories mainly depicting the central Saurashtra Region. His first short story collection *Ghughavta Pur* (1945) places him among the major regional writers. The local colour and human values with the true flavour of rustic life drawn from his use of colloquial language of Saurashtra adds to trend. His best known collections are *Padmaja*, *Champo ane Kel*, *Tej ane Timir*, *Roop Aroop*, among which 'Antsrota', 'Kamav Dikro', 'Assal Animalni Kitly', 'Champo ane Kel' are note worthy stories.

Along with Meghani, Pannalal, Petlikar and Madia the tradition of regional writinG was carried on by Pitambar Patel from North Gujarat and Pushkar Chandaervakar from the Bhal Region.

The writers who began their creative journey in the fifties and needs special mention are Bakulesh, Jayant Khatri, and Spanasth. Their concerns are more with the issues of their time, the lower class of the society reflecting the romantic air of Dhumketu.

Bakulesh likes to draw from characters and situations. His characters are from slums, red light areas, or from the labour class mostly urban to suggest that

they too live and cherish human values. Exaggeration is his style. 'Dhumadiyu', 'Vartani Harni, and 'Kadana Kanku' are some well-known of his early experimentative stories.

**Jayant Khatri** is one of the most significant short story writer in the fifties. He has come up with a fewer output in terms of number but his distinguished place as a short story writer is due to his contribution to his role as a writer in the phase of transition. He begins his literary journey in 1944 with the only pre-Independence short story collection *Fora* with fourteen stories. These stories alone can give us the estimation of the achievements of the writer. He took long to publish the next two collections *Vahta Zarana*(1952) and *Khara Bapore* (1968) which also reflects the sustained creativity in his very busy practice as a physician. A painter at heart, who believed that he could never write, from the harshest climatic region of kachchh Khatri himself speaks of intimacy with the land and its people in *Sansmruti* as:

There is a peculiar thing with me as a writer. I am terribly attached to my place and people; I know very intimately, the earth I trod upon. The wail of wind on duty rocky desolate plains...the evenings that die without glamour and the night sky so crystal clear that it almost speaks to you. I am left alone with them—I feel so very impotently happy—as if I am having a date with my sweetie (have you

read Camu's 'Adulterous Woman'?) the same way I feel about my people—he may be an ordinary labourer, a farmer, a house wife, pimp, or a prostitute—I know them through and through. I know all 'whys' and 'hows' about them. (8)

His contribution is his representation of kachchh and its distinct culture that is brought alive with its wilderness for the first time in written form. His stories are based on plots and the background. Some among the bests of his stories 'Lohinu Teepun', 'Anandnu Mot', 'Nag', 'Kalo Manas', 'Tej Gati' and 'Dhwani' 'Dhaad', 'Heero Khoont' and 'Khichdi' are among the best in Gujarati. Khatri is bold in dealing with sex, violence and sensuality. He has the diction and a view point to look at life that is to be faced against all the odds. The cheriya tree symbolically presents the philosophy of the people of coastal kachchh as put by Ghelo the hero of 'Dhhaad' in the very opening as:

"See," Said Ghela, pointing his finger at the cheriya tree, "Have you ever given thought as to how this cheriya tree nourish simply on the swamp with salty water over it. How does it grow, where does it get food from and how does it sustain?"

"The roots of this plant go deep in to the swamp, of which grows strong on its stem but because of no nutrition in the swamp the roots come out again and spread around the stem and get nourishment from air through the thorns, understood?"

“From air?”

“Yes from air, and yet after all this struggle the plant that humbly stood erect is eaten up by our camels, and dries up. This is the secret of life, dear Pranjivan, that pity, love, religion are all in books. The reality is that that one who is ferocious lives a good life.” (Dalal, 1991, 160)

Khatri's writes with intensity and is at ease with form which seems to be so natural that he writes what ever comes to his mind. Regarding short story form he believes that it is not possible to define this modern form nor can he accept any definition. To put it in his words as quoted by Suresh Dalal:

If anyone tells you to read something on the short story form, don't take note of it. Modern short story is not a form that can be defined. I had not accepted any definition given before thirty years for those times. What ever I want to say in a effective way in musing moments – and with a intense desire it is written effortlessly. Good writer do not even pre-plan their story. When you start writing everything comes spontaneously. (Dalal 1991, 3)

Taking a brief account of the memorable stories as 'Ame Boothimano'(We the Intellectuals) 'Lohinu Tipoo'(A Drop of Blood) 'Anadnu Mot'( Death of Anand), 'Heero Khunt' (Heero the Bull), or 'Bandh Barana Pachhal' we realise that the use of symbols as well as state of mind that is presented though rely more on events or story they are well drawn from the a psychoanalytical interest



of the writer who is well read and in a profession where he looks at life and nature with different dimension than his predecessors. 'Heero Khunt' humanises the animal character of bull to present the bold sexual theme of homosexuality. 'Anandnu Mot' is a story of a tuberculosis patient, Valji, relieved from hospital with no cure to breathe his last at home. It narrates the last short lived happy moments of his married life in a helpless state where death is inevitable and a final solution. The writer himself regards 'Anandnu Mot' as his best story for which he states;

'Anand nu Mot' is not about freedom from disease but freedom from hospital- the reason for the joy for the hero suffering from incurable tuberculosis. The joy captures every moment of his consciousness. As a result the pain of the disease, weakness, mental fatigue, and the unnatural personal relation are expressed in the emotion of joy. All other emotions lose their identity to place him in such a helpless condition. At last the suffocation in the last moment too hold on to the emotion of joy. Joy becomes obsession to an extent to be disgusted by joy... it's a portrayal of some (or most of) joys-experiences that are so tragic under smooth, shining thin veil. Its structure and compactness are its special features. (R. Patel 28)

Khatri presents unusual, to shock his readers, as well gives a shift to the form by widening the scope of themes that are bold and never taken up so

insightfully. In case of 'Apne Buddhijivio', his earliest attempts and first story in *Fora*, comparatively a longer story, discusses the unheroic act of committing suicide by Navin who among the intellectual circle of youth in Arts College, well read in the ideologies could not face the reality the world in practical life. The story is regarded as ahead of his times as nothing happens in the story, it's a story without a story, the suicide is used to discuss the issue of ideal and real and the unheroic age. There is no hero as such all the members of the intellectual circle and their failure in life and love keep discussing life but dare not to live it. In this respect it proves to be a milestone that does away with happening in a story. In 'Bandh Barna Pachhal' Khatri comes up with the subject of prostitution. He gives a different angle to the often discussed issue of prostitution. He does not write as a sympathiser as is commonly attempted to win the readers sympathy. Usually it is the economical pressures or social neglect that a person is presented to have been forced in to prostitution and the heroine craving for social acceptance is the state commonly projected. But in case of 'Bandh Barna Pachhal', Mangala, the heroine gradually submits to the profession not out of compulsions but her world of compulsions. The end is shocking while the opening is as good as the writers note on his selection of his characters. The writer is the narrator who meets the character on a road to tell her story. Suresh Dalal aptly remarks on the experimentation of Khatri as:

‘Bandh Barna Pachhal’ makes us realise as to what is the workshop of a creative writer like. A crowd of characters to sieve them and pick them, not presenting them as they are but to cut out a new figure is the true test of a writer. (Dalal 1991, 14)

Swapnasth, a poet and short story writer, has a blend of romantic and progressive. His well known collections *Din Raat* and *Dhunina Paan* mainly present the social and political themes.

To name few writers among many at the tail end of fifties are Mohanlal Mehta (Sopan), Jatinbhai Mehta, Rasikbhai Parekh, Bhavanishankar Vyas (Padwani ), Umedbhai Maniar, Chandulal Patel, Jain Bhikkhu, Damubhai Shukla, Sitaram Sharma, Bhagwati kumar Sharma, Mohanbhai Patel, Chinu Patwa, Nira Desai, Bhogilal Gandhi, Raman Pathak, Kantilal Parikh, Murli Thakur, Purnanand Bhatt, Babubhai Vaidh, and many more. The long list is suggestive of the practice and popularity of the form in the times where the urban educated middle class was growing and the printing technology too was gave rise to print periodicals like *Chandni*, *Araam*, *Sarita*, *Aarsi*, *Varsha*, *Raksha* etc., in which the short story found a place. According to the count by Prof. Takhtasinh Parmar approximately fifteen hundred stories were written in 1962. This gives us an idea

as to how popularly the form was accepted by the writers, publishers and the readers.

### **Women Writers**

Bharti Vaidh's edited anthology: *Lilavati Munshithi Himanshi Shelat* is the first attempt to compile and critic on the contribution of Gujarati woman short story writers. She takes note of the earliest crude attempts by Vidyagauri Nilkanth to have attempted at the form originally in Dalpatram's *Tarkikbodh'* as early as 1870. The early attempts and contributions already mentioned earlier during the twenties Lilavati Munsu is the pioneer woman writer to publish an anthology *Sneh Bandhan* and later to follow were Vinodini Nilkanth, Sumati Lallubai, Sarojini Mehta, Saudamini Mehta, Labhuben Mehta and Shanta Gandhi during the third and the fourth decades. By this time the eminent novel writers as Vasuben Bhatt, Kundanika Kapadia, Dhiruben Patel and Saroj Pathak too consciously attempted at short story with their wider experience and understanding of life due to the spread of education and professions among woman after the Independence. Most of these writers are as yet actively writing today. The major contributors then were Ila Arab Mehta, Varsha Adalja, Bharti

Vaidh, Minal Dixit, Suhas Oza and others. It is with Bharti Dalal, Hemansi Selat and Suvarna who too add to the changing modernist trend after the influence of Suresh Joshi. Parallels can be seen in case of the developments if we look at the trends gender wise. The contribution of woman writers especially after the Independence is noteworthy.

### **New Trends**

The survey of five decades, give us a fairly good idea of the rise and development of short story form to its maturity. The practice was so vigorous that experiment wise, theme wise and overall contribution to the form is not so easy to capture. The form which was taken up in the early phase as a non serious 'time pass' reading or a handy form, short enough that can be read in a single sitting and largely with love stories, social problems and moral based writings grew to establish as a literary form that gave birth to a long range of creative writers who sustained the readership for decades.

By fifties we get the indication that a saturation point was reached where the further scope in subject matter and structure was not possible with emotional rendering, presentation of rural and urban life, social, political and economical issues that largely relied on an event or incident in a person's life. This drew the

writers after the Independence to think anew, take a new stride. They largely looked forward to the post war development in writing and the dawn of new era in independent India. They looked at the times as modern where an individual was central rather than the larger groups he belongs to. Jayant Pathak considers this 'Nutan Pravah' (The new trend) in his *Gujarati Toonki Varta: Pravah Darshan* as:

We observe the slackness and confinement in the fifth decade of this century. The stories are becoming stereotypes. The writers trod on the same path with subject and structure. The path has been over trodden and its likeness makes it disgusting. The writers cannot think anew, they are taking up the same subjects and keep writing in the same style. Depicting the atmosphere of village and city, the social and economical problems of its people, the writers have squeezed out all this and when there is nothing new to tell they started imitating themselves. The result was that story lost its freshness... (80)

It is with the publication of Suresh Joshi's *Gruhpravesh* (1957) that the new era in Gujarati short story begins. The shift is regarded popularly as 'Ghatana tatvavalo lop' ie. End of the element of incidence or happening. Dhirubhai very comprehensively expounds on the shift as:

...the modern short story writers have practiced and experimented widely in comparison to the novelists. If we take a holistic view of the trends we mark that the short story writer rested his gaze from incident to character, from character to his emotions, from there to symbol, and lastly to word, Infinite word, meaning free word. So the modern short story writer and the poet have come too closer. We saw that prosaic symbolic modern poems interchange with some short stories of Suresh Joshi and Kishor Jadav and 'Harmonica' of Madhurai. The story was freed from incidents of the physical context of time and space as a modern attempt to give it an eternal dimension. (Thakar 222).

Contemporaries of Suresh Joshi who contribute in the seventh and the eighth decade are Chandrakant Bakshi, Raghuvir Chaudhari, Suresh Dalal, Vijay Shashtri, Ashwin Desai, Bhagwatikumar Sharma, Pinakin Dave and others. Some later writers who are renowned and experimentative to present life in the modern context going back to the incidents and emotions are Dhirendra Pandya, Rajnikumar Pandya Himanshi Selat, Dilip Ranpura, Joseph Macwan, Manilal Patal, Jayvadan Patel and others. Some of the major writers of the last two decades of the last century are Kishor Jadav, Jyotish Jain, Suman Shah, and Chinu Modi who continued the new trend but are turning back to the earlier trends finding it overdone and are in search of fresh themes.

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## CHAPTER IV

### COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GUJARATI AND INDIAN ENGLISH SHORT STORY

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Indian comparative literature, the very title poses a number of questions to begin with, the first and the foremost is the latest debates where the comparative literature as a discipline is being questioned with the new developments like translation studies and culture studies. They are emerging with rigor with the trend of specialization in every field. In the introduction to *Comparative Literature – A Critical Introduction*, Susan Bassnett speaks of this crisis as:

Just as it became necessary for linguistics to rethink its relationship with Semiotics, so the time is approaching for comparative literature to rethink its relationship with Translation Studies. Semiotics as first regarded as a sub-category of linguistics, and only later did it become clear that the reverse was the case, and linguistics was in effect a branch of wider discipline, semiotics. Comparative literature has always claimed translation as a sub-category, but as translation studies established itself firmly as a subject based on inter-cultural study and offering a methodology of some vigor, both in terms of theoretical and descriptive work, so comparative literature appears less like a discipline and more like a branch of something else. Seen in this way, the problem of crises

could then be put into perspective, and the long, unresolved debate on whether comparative literature is or not a discipline in its own right could finally could finally and definitely be shelved. (11)

Comparative literature emerged with publication of *cours de littérature compare* (1816) in France which then appeared in Germany with the term, 'vergleichede literaturgeschichte', while it was who first used it in his letter (1848) to pronounce it as comparative literatures. In early nineteenth century the concept spread in Europe with the idea that no literature can be studied in isolation and more than one literatures were taken up for study mainly in Europe primarily with the study of mutual influence within European nationalities. From this give and take and exchange and influence of one nation to the other/s in culture gave birth the uses of national identities to the culture in search of roots and struggling for the Independence took a new turn to guard the national identity and heritage. This resulted in archival studies as was the case with the Czech National revival to go back to medieval texts. Translation played a major role in comparative study of literature at this stage along with the developments in archaeology, philology, history, arts and translation of medieval texts. Literary history led to cultural identity. Rise of nationalism in European states and emergence of new nation studies brought in the politics of establishing their superiority over others, along with the primary idea of world literature of

Goethe. In its early phase, in the race of establishing oneself superior to another it narrowed down the scope of comparative study. Eloquence as 'what Europe is to the world, French is to Europe'. Or Macaulay's oft quoted statement in his *Minute* addressed to the Governor General of India in 1835 as quoted by Bassnett that:

I have never found one among them (Orientalists) who can deny that a single shelf of good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. I have certainly not met with any Orientalist who ventured to maintain that the Arabic and Sanskrit poetry could be compared to that of great European nations. (17)

With the subsequent spread of the European empires and as part of their strategies to colonize the 'other', comparative literature was also a form of cultural colonization and one way was to establish themselves superior. To an extent that there emerged the radical German school and the Italian school of comparative literature.

The French approach of binary studies was largely accepted an approach where comparative study could take place between two languages. The problem arises when looked at the binaries within a self of language. For example when it comes to Celtic languages it is English that dominates. This led to the other

extern of dividing the nations or imagined nation as Rene Wellek attacked the obsolete methodology of French as quoted by Bassnett, to state that it was time ripe, to abandon the old unnecessary distinction and see them for what they were, as the product of particular age and particular cultural concept as:

Comparative literature is identical with the study of literature independent of linguistic, ethenic, and political boundries. It cannot be confined to a single method...nor can comparison be confined to actual historical contexts. They may be...as much value in comparing phenomena such as languages or genres historically unrelated as in studying influences discoverable from evidence of reading or parallels...The three main branches of literary study – history, theory and criticism – involve each other...comparative literature can and will flourish only if it shakes off artificial limitations and becomes simply the study of literature. (36)

With emergence of American School of comparative literature in 1961 with publication of essays published by Southern Illinois University Press defined comparative for as:

The time has come, as Rene Wellek and Harry Levin were saying long ago, to abandon the old, unnecessary distinctions and to see them for what they were, as the products of a particular age and a particular cultural context. In the next

Chapter, we shall consider, an alternative purl, perceive on comparative literature, Also not without its failings, but which can at least be contrasted with ', the binary approach - the development of comparative literature outside Europe. (30)

The shift was that the dominant French school was given a jolt with new approach that was descriptive and synchronic in contrast to historical or generic, which resulted in publication of bibliography of comparative literature. The American school emphasized on process rather than product. As Bassnett remarks that the depoliticization of comparative literature is the hallmark of American school as:

After the world war more and more nations got political independence and Europe was no more the center the comparative literature too was free to taking transnational approach of great book model going international to look at history as centre to comparative literature but cultural history and not any other kind.(36)

The American formalistic school paved a way for the African school with the place for Afro-American literature in the literary history of American literature. With the post-colonial times and post colonial approaches African, Latin American critics and confront the comparative literature with their post-



colonial in search to establish their own schools. African critics as Thionga Chidi Amuta Chinua Achebe out rightly reject the European model and English as a language which was held as part of their colonizing project. And again the problematics of naming African literature or Indian literature monolithical was countered by critics as Swapna Majmudar as:

‘Indian Literature ... should be compared not with any single literature of the West, but with the concept of Western Literature as a whole, while the regional literatures should be assigned the status of constituent sub-national literatures in India.” (Bassnett 37)

In complete contrast the comparative literary study in other parts of the world stresses 'the politicization of literature and rejects the formalist approach completely. Analyzing East-West literary relations, Swapna Majmudar argues that Indian literature, like it; and Latin American counterparts, forms a community what he calls 'sub-national literatures no less robust than the components of Western literature': 'except for the fact that in the former only literary semblances count for their commonness .while in the latter a common ethos, equally manifest in all, hold them together.'" In consequence, he suggests

that comparison should take place not across individual cultural boundaries, but or a larger scale altogether.

Finally the question raised by Bassnett regarding the crisis in her introductory quote she goes on to an extent to pronounce:

Today, comparative literature in one sense is dead. The narrowness of the binary distinction, the unhelpfulness of the ahistorical approach, the complacent shortsightedness of the Literature as-universal-civilizing-force approach have all contributed to its demise. But it lives on under other guises: in the radical reassessment of western cultural models at present being undertaken in many parts of the world, in the transcendence of disciplinary boundaries through new methodological insights supplied by gender studies or cultural studies, in the examination of the processes of intercultural transfer that are taking place within translation studies. (47)

Turning to the Indian scene the same anxiety to evolve a model of its own that can be rightly called Indian comparative literature is an ongoing debate among the scholars India as an independent country.

India—the land of one of the oldest ancient living civilization with its oldest traditions in literature and cultures that survived due to the in built mechanism of co-existing in all its various forms. Its mammoth population and

geographical size is as large as a continent where a big Indian state is bigger than the largest country of Europe. Whatever written in the last two hundred years is largely in the forms that evolved in the west after the European renaissance and onwards. What is thought and written though clothed in the western forms has the soul that is Indian. The large number of writers writing in Indian languages continued the oral tradition in many dialects from length and breath of the country. They largely draw from the culture that survived due to its rootedness in the soil through traditions. After Independence, Sahitya Akedemi took up with the national project (which also was necessity of India as a federal state) to construct and establish the idea of Indian literature. As expected in a democratic country every language and its literature are given equal status of 'Indian Language' irrespective of political division of states or representative speakers of the language.

In his *Sahitya Akedemi Samvatsar series: Three*, Umashankar Joshi speaking on the Idea of Indian Literature raises a few questions in the very beginning to give a frame work to his lecture:

After a brief survey from its ancient roots in the first phase that he dates back to 2000BC to AD 1000 to the post-Independence period comes to think of the relevance of the nomenclature 'Indian Literature' that he assume to Dr.

Radhakrishna noting his brilliant in his “Indian Literature though written in many languages is one” and again the endeavour of Sahitya Akedemi and his lecture to justify and relate it to comparative literatures. (13)

Establishing comparative literature in the cultural context in answering the basic questions he raised earlier and further discussing the Indianess he confronts the issue of Indian literature and culture as the converging and unifying irrespective of the political idea of India as a geographical identity:

While one talks of Indian culture or literature the idea of an Indian state is not predicated. Firstly, there was no unified state in India during the (first and second phases of Indian literature. During both periods even though the country was divided politically, the people had developed a fair measure of cultural unity. While the political activity divided the people and the feudal princedoms went on warring amongst themselves, the! Poetic activity united them in a surprisingly abundant measure. (43)

And lastly before concluding he makes an important suggestion to the English and Departments translating an important part of project and emphasizes the status of regional languages as:

The mills of translation activity must work overtime in a multilingual country like India. If only one work from each of say twenty languages is to be published

in all other Indian languages, three hundred and eighty translators have to be at work. All incentives and encouragement should be provided for translation work. Can we expect the Hindi and English and other language departments and the new universities establish for some languages make translation work an important part of their projects? There should also be a central pool of translated works both, in Hindi and English. As all Indian languages are national languages, the habit of referring to some languages as 'regional' should better be discarded as early as possible, except where the reference is specifically to the official language of a particular State. The constitution lays down that, Hindi (and for some time English) will work as the official language of the Union Government and the region States which opt for it and the other 'languages will be official languages of particular region States and will, be in that context called 'regional'. In no other context, i.e. where no Reference to 'official' language is meant, the languages should be 'referred to as 'regional'. Certainly, there is no 'regional' literature. Hindi, over and above, being the 'official' language of the Union Government, can work as a link language and it can commend itself to the people of the country by proving its usefulness through various cultural services, by creating a central pool of important works of Indian writers. (U.Joshi, 2003, 49)

Sisir Kumar Das the writer of *History of Indian Literature* (1991) and a renown comparatist when takes up the issue of 'Construction of Indian

Literature' draws our attention the problematisation and controversies that goes on with the term 'Indian Literature'. He diagnoses the problem as, 'its use as a category of identification of a body of literary works composed in more than one language'. (33) This multilingual aspect of Indian literature is further clarified as how this multilingual feature of India was problematic for oriental scholars who were the first once to use the nomenclature in their limited way is countered is noteworthy: (Das 39)

As Umashankar Joshi brings in cultural context, Sisir Kumar Das too brings in the cultural context as a pioneer comparatist that: 'Indian moves on to the aspect of comparative literature. The very idea of Indian Literature is a practice in comparative literature.' (Das 41)

Almost a decade before Sisir Kumar, Amiya Dev in his *Comparative Indian Literature* states that 'the very concept of Indian literature is comparative' (74). He does not speculate or question the discipline but states that '... that comparative literature takes on a special character in approaching Indian Literatures' (79) and this special character is after drawing hypothetical parallels between Indian Comparative Literature and western comparative literature and examining that in case of India we are multilingual people and we have a complex consciousness, even if we speak one language we have complex consciousness

which against the tangible relation in case of Europe. Thus coming to give structure to India comparative literature in the formative stage in his 'Comparative Indian Literature' in *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature* (20-21, 1982-83) as:

Let us begin hypothetical parallel between Comparative Indian Literature and Comparative Western Literature. It is not customary to call comparative literature in the West Comparative Western Literature, but that is what it was in its inception, a study of interrelations between one Western Literature and another- one of the earliest documents was a *Histoire etrangeres literature francaise au moyen age comparee aux literatures europeennes* (1841) by Jean-Jacques Ampere- and that is what it largely is even now- A major project undertaken by International Comparative Literature Association in the recent years is to compile a comparative history of *Western* Literatures. Anyway, is Comparative Indian Literature an Indian version of Comparative Western Literature, that is , are we involved in the first place, with sorting out relations between one Indian literature and another and so doing, with devising an elaborate machinery a la Fraich, of 'successes' and 'fortunes', of 'afterlives', of 'intermediaries' and 'translations' and so on, in imitation of celebrated Baldensperger-Friederich *Biography of Comparative Literature*? In other words, is that what Jean-Marie Carre has called "reports de fait", our primary target? And secondly, are we supposed to some general literature in Van Tienghem's sense, but fully legitimately

comparative literature according to American school, by charting out what inter literary movements we have had and what common principles of periodisation could be arrived at? Besides, are we committed to genealogy and thematology where by we are to work out the history of the Indian genres and tabulate the Indian themes? Pushing the parallels further and taking a further cue from the American school, do we also need to look into the relation of literature and other arts on the Indian scene or into, what Ulrich Weisstein has called, "the mutual illumination of the arts"? (71-72)

On the above developments since 1960s, of the development of Indian literature, Aijaz Ahmad in the chapter "Indian Literature: Notes towards the Definition of a Category" in *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*, on the outset of his discussion, he states: 'At some level, of course, every book written by an Indian is part of thing called Indian Literature.' (245)

He too comes up with the theory considering the basic aspects of that evolve in all the endeavors of earlier discourses i.e. multilingual situation and necessity of comparative framework. He theorizes or gives a framework for the comparatists which is a manifesto for the researcher and institution to work in direction of a body of literature that exists but lacks in producing a coherent and unified knowledge. Further with regards to multilingualistic in contrast to the European he too draws on cultural ethos as the unifying principle which



crisscrosses geographical and political boundaries. It is necessary to quote the paragraphs which is noteworthy focusing on common national origin:

The other emphasis of my argument here on bi- and multilingualities surely has to do with our personal lives – for rare would be Indian with any degree of urban or periurban experience who functions with just one language- but also with the very shapes of our collectivity, past and present....So that the national literature of India principal of unity not in linguistic unity but in civilizational moorings and cultural ethos, hence in histories of literary movements and even compositional forms which have crisscrossed geographical boundaries and linguistic differences... multiplicity of languages is the fundamental characteristic of this civilization, this nation, this literature, and the the structure of its unity is far less quantifiable than in Europe or in Europe's offshoots in north America...

There is doubtless the generality undisputed idea that the 'Indian Literature' exists, whether definable and quantifiable or not in generic or any other terms, one whose unity resides in common national origin of its authors and the common civilizational ethos of the Indian people. (Ahmad 255)

Having surveyed the idea of Indian literature as an established concept of the product of comparative literature and the unifying factories culture, we see that in the multilingual country as India, literature can never be studied in

isolation. It is through comparative study of life or more literatures from Indian languages that contributes to the body of knowledge as a whole. The immediate issue would be justification of the present study in the selection of Gujarati and Indian English literatures for the study. Gujarati on one hand is an indigenous Indian language which has a locale of its origin in western India while English language of a European origin whose presence is for selection of English language could be that, after the Independence English is also one of the official languages of India, it as it has no specific local of origin though it has ocquired a status of pan-Indian language. English in India had been imposed for many varied reasons as a part of the imperial strategy by the British but was never a compulsion in case of creative writing. As Ahmad puts it: '...but there is no sense that English as such has rightful place in India' (268) to elaborate on the way it 'was' imposed.

The issue has been long discussed by critics and early Indian English writers who had to address this issue to justify their creative ability and we are at a juncture where English enjoys a status or an distinct identity as 'Indian English' which has been engulfed by a culture which has always been open to give space to any people, idea or language and turn it into its own. English did enjoy a special status in the colonial times as master's language and thus establish as

superior but today in the post colonial time there is no official hierarchy except for its global significance and pan Indian nature. Gujarati on the other hand is commonly regarded as regional language. But Umashankar denies using the word 'regional' as quoted earlier.

Sisir Kumar Das addresses the reductionist view for regional as 'The nationalist construction of Indian literature as one though written in many languages need not be criticised as reductionalist... (Das, 19996-97, 41), and again from the cultural context he further compares the Indian situation with Hebrew, Greek and Latin to put forward the linguistic aspect of the of regional and national even in case of Geneological identities of Indian language in case of Gujarati against the Dravidian family of languages as:

...The Indian situation is different from all the three. Here is a continuous contact between languages of different families and between literatures of varying quality and different traditions. Linguists have demonstrated that despite their distinct genealogical identities the Indian languages converge to one another in their sound system, grammar and syntax...the convergence between literatures is even stronger: there is convergence towards common themes and genres, metaphors and symbols, and also towards poetics and literary terms. On the basis of the convergence alone one can look at India as a literature-area too, which provide the rationale for an Indian literature. (43)

If culture is central as the unifying factor for the Indian comparative literature there can be question as to how Indian English literature and Gujarati literature would confront to evolve culture studies in other words what are would be the tools. The Indian culture can best be defined as: 'a way of life'. In case of culture study the west looked at the importance of culture due to its aspect of power that it holds on the people. Raymond Williams, first in his work *Culture and Society* (1958), and then with more depth in *Keywords* (1976, which carried a subtitle: *A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*) wherein he surveyed this word right from its etymology to the various connotations it put on in the history of British thought. The abridged version of his lengthy note on this word is as:

**Culture** is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. This is so partly because of its intricate historical development, in several European languages, but mainly because it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought.

'**Culture**' comes from the Latin 'root' word '**colere**' which had a range of meanings: inhabit, cultivate, protect, honour with worship. Some of these meanings eventually separated, though still with occasional overlapping, in the derived nouns. Thus 'inhabit' developed through the Latin 'colonus' to 'colony'. 'Honour with worship' developed through the Latin 'cultus' to 'cult'. The Latin

'cultura' took on the main meaning of 'cultivation' or tending (of plants and animals), and by the early 15<sup>th</sup> c. passed into English as '**culture**'. Thus the primary meaning of this word was in husbandry, the tending of something, basically crops and animals. From early 16<sup>th</sup> c., the tending of natural growth was extended to a process of human development and this meaning remained until the early 19<sup>th</sup> c. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> c., the continental development of this word, especially the German '**Kultur**' started gaining ascendance. The debates of German intellectuals like Herder and (by the 1900s) Humboldt bifurcated 'Kultur' to have two senses: '**civilization**' and '**culture**' with the former suggesting the material and the latter the spiritual development of the human society. Here onwards begins the complex journey of 'culture' into modern usages that broadly can be seen as:

- i) the independent and abstract noun which describes a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development; e.g., Byzantine culture;
- ii) the independent noun, whether used generally or specifically, indicating a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general; e.g., metropolitan culture, Coca-Cola culture;
- iii) the independent and abstract noun which describes the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity: thus, 'culture' is music, literature, painting and sculpture, dance, theatre and film, and a

**Ministry of Culture** refers to these specific activities, sometimes with the addition of philosophy, scholarship and history.( Williams 87-93)

Few tools or methods can be sorted from the above discussions as cultural, linguistic, historical and genre which could be overlapping. Relevance of any study, especially in context of Indian comparative literature, rest on according to Ahmad:

A literature exists in theoretical object to the extent that its production can be examined in relation to their objective determination by the development of culture as a whole, so the periodisation comes to rest on shift more fundamental than mere breaks in chronology and is able to account for the dominance of the major generic forms, their uneven developments in form in terms of developments in terms of period and region, as well as the material condition for the subordination of other generic forms in terms of historical progress. The difficulty in thinking of an 'Indian Literature' therefore is not that it is spread over many languages, with histories of very uneven development, nor that the state boundaries have been shifting through all the centuries we know of. The difficulty lies rather, in very premises that have often governed the narratisation of that history. (Aizaz 244)

Considering Bassnett's subsidiarizing the area of comparative literature, to move towards translation studies today, in the times of specialization the once

subsidiary areas of comparative literature have taken the stage. In context of the literatures written in English from the former colonized world including Indian English literature translates the endogenous culture in form of new literature.

During the colonial period the domination of English literary culture due to imposition of official power in case of south India is well apprehended by K. Raghvendra Rao in his article, 'Translation the Fate of Colonial Bilingualism', as:

Under colonial compulsions, two basic processes were initiated in the domain of literary culture. The first was the political and cultural dominance of the English language and its literary culture through the creation of Anglicised literary elite, which went beyond the merely instrumental approach to English and began to imagine itself in the role of creative writers in English. This role, first donned with hesitation and naivete, tended to become more serious with the prospects of the colonial regime consolidating itself and apparently acquiring the status of near permanence. With the increasing universalisation of the Western literary culture, though confronting the Indian English writer in the immediate form of English literature and its culture as well as its unstated ideological premises, the Indian writers in English could feel more secure and more self-confident in their literary efforts. But the literature they were hoping to create acquired, ironically enough, greater legitimacy after the end of the colonial era. One may cite the appearance of a new crop of Indian English poets in the Illustrated Weekly of India in the

fifties and the emergence of the Writers Workshop in Calcutta. These developments were predicated on the claim that the Indian writer can create authentic creative literature, despite the fact that it was not the language of his daily living, thanks to the peculiar situation brought into existence by the colonial history. These Indian writers in English, I suggest, were basically bilingual in their literary sensibility and culture. Some of them wrote in the mother-tongue as well as English, even calling the latter their father-tongue. When they wrote in English they were involved in a very complicated process of creativity in which they translated their unwritten Indian language poems into their written English poems. Those whose mother-tongue was not an Indian language, translated their Indian cultural ethos into English. The theory that those who had greater non-Indian linguistic situation could write better than those with one cannot be sustained, since some of the better known among them Ramanujan or Parthasarathy or Lal, were all poets with native linguistic moorings. The point of my argument is that a process akin to translation, however unconscious or subconscious, occurred in the production of the best Indian creative work in English. In other words, they should be regarded less as original creative works than as unwritten works translated into English.

(S.K.Desai, 89)

It is by no means to denounce or disregard or undermine the creativity of the writers. It would bold to call all the literature written by all the men English



writers writing all the non-English writers writing creatively from native lands or abroad as translators with all the limitations of my reading in translation studies I move a step ahead to Bassnett into direction to comparative literature in recognizing that 'writing does not'. (Aizaz 160)

As short story too is a prose narrative Kapil Kapoor model to examine novels in Indian languages. Indianness of unindianness is the basis of narrative patterns and furthermore to see how these narratives are products of native Indian traditions and their western counterparts as received by various novelists in different Indian languages could directly applied.

While in a similar endeavor Avadesh Kumar Singh in his article *Constructing a Theory of Indian Novel: Comparative study with reference to Gujarati, Hindi and Indian English literatures* refers to the metaphors like 'phool-goonthani (a flowers knitted into a wreath), Ganga, banayan tree, raag or thali' (8) against which gives direction to the regard. The metaphors used by the writers and critics in case of short story, turn. He suggests to 'priorities the local against global by given preference to local whenever there is tension.' (106)

Thus, formulating the scope of comparative study of pre-Independence Indian Gujarati and Indian English short story which could be a wide area in

case of specific attention to the sub areas and the period of time that extends to almost seven decades of early attempts in the last two decades of nineteenth century to nineteen hundred fifty with volumes of anthology and huge number of writers. It could be a major collaborative project work. The attempt here would be, as stated earlier, to look into the budding phase, evolution, and decade wise ontological study with linguistic, historical, cultural tradition, genre study overlapping other in textual as well as contextual study.

### **The Early Phase**

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century introduces most of the modern literary forms in all Indian languages. Historically the century is regarded as the renaissance period of India. As in case of European renaissance it brought in the awakening if not at the level of masses atleast among the educated classes. This resulted in the reforms and intellectual activities under the colonial power. With establishment of Fort William College in 1800 in Calcutta, dawns the modern phase of Indian literature. The Baptist Mission started a printing press near Serampore and published the grammar of Bengali, Punjabi, and Marathi, publication of text books, grammar books and translation in news paper and periodicals resulted in a shift from verse writing which was a continuous tradition in India, to prose. As Umashankar Joshi marks this change as:

When we examine the literary output of the first half of the nineteenth century, the first thing that strikes our attention is the emergence of prose as the potent vehicle of social intercourse. Prose had been sadly neglected in the past. With india's coming on the periphery of the industrial civilisation and the consequent increase in mobility, communicational needs increased considerably and the prose was developed to meet the new needs. ... (U. Johi, 2003, 37)

Socially the early thinkers and reformers as Raja Ram Mohan Roy introduced modernity and influence the social and Indian scenes. Along with the essay he introduced the the biographical writings along with a fragment of his autobiography that existin a letter of his. Dayanand saraswati wrote an autobiography. The Christian Mission activities gave rise to the awareness of social state of Hindu, the inhuman practices as sati, rigid class system, illiteracy, ignorance about social sciences, superstitions and slumber gave rise to religion organization. As the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Prathna Sabha, and the Ram Krishna Mission awakened the people to their past glories and boost their moral of the people, by suggesting integral reforms and achieving the status of the race. This also resulted in translating the scriptures and establishing the cultural identity and unity.

Sahjanand Swami, Ishwarchandra Vidhyasagar, Keshabchandra Sen, Devendranath Thakoor, Dayanand Saraswati, Vivekanand and among others. Sahjanand Swami from central India had a great influence in Gujarat. Dayanand Saraswati born in Gujarat established the Arya Samaj primarily in Punjab to influence the length and breathe of the country. Vivekanand again with English education took up the order of sanyas and walked from West to East and then to South to know the state of the nation and finally after the return from America addressed the gatherings giving them a spiritual vision of India and a direction to work for the nation. The reformers who in their zeal to reform were englicised and abused all that was in the culture were resisted and the cultural integrity and spiritual identity swayed the people to decolonize their minds. Vivekanand's speeches from Colombo to Almora were written and published to influence Shri Aurobindo, Gandhi, Bhagatsingh, and the readers especially the youth in the times to come. The major role played by the native periodicals, to reach the masses all over India and particularly Bengal, Mumbai and Madras presidency, resulted in emergence of prose forms essay, autobiography, biography as well as the novel form almost all the Indian languages. This experiments and use of prose helped in formation of regional languages and give a boost to nationalistic spirit.

Short story as a literary form, as in case of all other modern prose forms of literature went through the introductory stages of experimentation as translations, compilations of folk stories, popular oral literature be written with the zeal of preservation. Well known fables, Parables, (mainly from *Panchtantas* and *Hitopadesh*) Bed-time stories, writing historical stories and legends in the bardic tradition as well as some crude attempts were made to 'write' what was traditionally 'told'. It is by the end of nineteenth century that short story form emerged. At the earliest stage, *Isapnitini Katha* (1828), *Isapnitini Vato* (1854), *Dodasalini Vato*, *Panch Akhyan*, *Pancho Pakhyan* and *Balmitra* were published that influenced the creative writers to come. Dhumketu in his forward to *Tankha Mandal - IV*, states how he had liked it and was influenced by it. *Gatha Samaj* was published in 1866.

In case of Gujarati Short Stories the earliest mention of the form is by Narmad, who is regarded as the first modern writer. As a reformer he states that *Gatha* (story) needs to be attempted at in the new age, drama and *Gatha* are the two which can be very important instruments to improve upon the esthetics in man. He himself never practiced it, but his contemporary Dalpatram published some moral stories in *Tarkik Bodh* from 1865 and in 1870 published it as a book. In 1866 *Gatha Samaj* was published which is looked up at for its elite use of

language. Farmanji and Bamanji shows that the tresses of originality in his *Gujarat ane Kathiyawad Des ni Varta* (1872) with some well-known stories with historical figures are complied. 'Gurjari' is one among the stories that is written in a lighter vein where Gurjati teaches a lesson to the Badsah of Delhi saying that 'The tail of my goat is bigger than your muchh' (Mustach). The same story was adopted as a play Mena Gurjari and later it appears in the title of The Gurjari film. For the archival study let us look at an attempt at form by Mehta Gulabri Laxmidas Butch who published *Char Kahavati Ramuji Vartao* (so called four humourous stories) in 1889. The title page has a *doha* to attract the reader which runs in two couplets as:

An interesting story, before the gentleman

From beginning to end, read it with delight.

Pardon if I have done a blunder,

I do not have an apt study

With the limited knowledge,

I am a servant to all gentlemen. (Butch, title page)

It is a thirty three page long story divided into four parts about a wealthy businessman Zaverchand Shah and his prodigal son Phoolchand. As titled, it draws humour out of the story told in a higher tone and is made interesting by

the situations Phoolchand is placed in and description. It can seem a document to study the shaping of a genre as well as language. Thus, attempts were made by the writers to document the well-known stories. In Pandit Yug, we have Novel coming on its own and then developed to maturity with Govardhanram's *Saraswatichandra* but it was not a ripe time for the short story form. Jehharam Desai, Ramanbhai Nilkanthi, Rammohanrai Desai attempted the short story form. The periodicals as *Sundaribodh*, *Varta Varidh*, *Samalalochak*, *Chandra Haptoy* gave space to Short Story which in itself is a breakthrough to accept the short story as a form and the growing awareness and experimentation in form to see it emerge with the publication of the first short story 'Shantidas' in 1900.

In case of Indian English Short Story not much importance is given to the inquiry into development of the form by researchers or literary historiographers. It also is the case with the practitioners. The two well-known literary histories by M. K. Naik and K. R. Shrinivas refer to it as at the end of their discussion on novel with mention of the names of the writers and their works without any reference to particular work or trends. Short Story has remained marginalized as a form. Iyengar as well as Naik in their literary history write on the form after discussing the other novelist not even dividing the two genres with a subtitle.

M. K. Naik at the tail-end of his *The Winds of Change: 1857 to 1920* writes: 'The story of the early Indian story is even shorter.' (109)

As already stated in the earlier chapter, it is Cornelia Sorabji, the first woman advocate who is regarded as the first short story writer in Indian English with publication of *Love and Life Behind Purdah* in 1901. The striking similarity that we find in the evolution is not the year but that both the writers are from the same profession. Ambai Desai too was an advocate in Baroda Court. Both the writers are not important as first contributors or not professionally writers but their works give us an opportunity to look at this phase back into historical political and social milieu. Gujarat was politically divided into many small states. Southern Gujarat and some pockets in Saurashtra Amreli and Kodinar were under the Maratha ruler, central Gujarat, northern, west Saurashtra region of Junagadh were under Muslim rulers while major part of Saurashtra, Walar and Kutch had been divided into small Rajput Kingdoms. The Gayakwar state and many other small states as Gondal, Bhavanagar, Rajkot and Jamnagar had rulers who gave much attention to education. Gondal state Maharaja Bhagvatsinh and Sayaji Rao Gayakwar of Vadodara State made women education compulsory. Bhagvatsinh also patronaged and took personal interest to compile *Bhagvat Go Mandal* the Gujarati dictionary.



Before we go on to discuss *Shantidas* a manifesto against colonial economic policy and other institutions let us at length view the times with economical condition during this time. Irfan Habib, a Marxist historian in his *Progress of Accumulation* states:

The imports of British manufactures into India, then, meant larger 'use values' in return for the same exchange value for their buyers and therefore enlarged consumption of goods (e.g. of cloth in India). It called forth the ruin of Indian artisans who previously produced goods that were now thrown out of the market by competing imports ... British capitalism gains by this means may well be found to match those achieved through tributes. In 1900-01 textile manufactures, hardware, machinery and mill work accounted for 46.5 percentage of all merchandise imported into India, the imported (almost entirely British made) cloth amounted to 1,875 million yards, while domestic cloth production the same year was estimated 1,067 million yards only.

Though large number of Indian artisans was ruined, the realization of the surplus value by the British capitalism through capture of the Indian market was not so simple process of wealth transfer from India. The market was captured because with the steady rise of industrial productivity in Britain, the values of its products fell continuously. These imports (besides the need of tribute) had to be paid for by India in raw materials and wage goods (cotton, jute, oilseeds, tea,

animal skin) ... In such a situation, one would naturally expect to find an overall shift in terms of trade in favour of agriculture between 1861 and 1910, ... (283)

Ambal Desai was the first graduate from Ahmedabad, influenced by Swadeshi movement in Maharashtra. He left his professional practice for the national cause, it was quite before the return of Gandhi from South Africa and a little before the divide of Bengal i.e. *Bangbhang* movement. As an intellectual activist he wrote books on economics and addressed the meetings all over Gujarat against the British trade and gave lead to the Swadeshi movement in Gujarat. Shantidas the only creative writing by him is a story that takes up the economical issue. It was a new issue raised in the new times but along with economical problem he handles the social and cultural aspects. It is a utopian text. It brings to life the cultural values of Indian people through a happy and peaceful village. A chorah, community hall, temple and a chabutara are the markers of Indian village. The caste system that is presented as a scientific social system- where each cast is interdependent and based on economics that gives autonomy to a village- against the then most commonly abused system by most reformers is done in the simplest way. The blind imitation of the western culture as a new modern superstition, the adverse effect of English education and many more strategies of the colonial power along with the legal system that functioned at the micro-level of the village brings the end to the story with people taking a

wow before the '*tulsi*' to solve their economical problem at their level. It is ahead of its time in structure and theme. The language too is strikingly used.

Cormalia Sohrabji a parsi-converted to Christianity as part of her profession in those days had to meet woman for the legal matters. Her stories present the state of woman among four walls of the Zananas. Many a stories unfold the realities stories of women she met the very title of the anthology *Love and Life*. Behind the Pardah reflects her concerns where Pardah, the veil, is very symbolic of the miserable, subjected status of women.

Mention of Rabindranath Tagore would not be out of place though all his stories are available in English through translation (only two were translated by him) these stories had a great influence on generations of writers to come. Most of his stories are translated in Gujarati. He wrote his stories in the last decade of nineteenth century when no other major writer and Indian language had attempted at writing a short story. Whatever was being written was adaptation, translations or writing on the traditional folk tales. Tagore with his first collection is the realistic presentations of Bengali life. Many of his stories like 'Kabuliwala', '*Subha*', and 'The Post Master' appear as part of curriculum in almost all over India. He is considered to be the first short story writer of India.

Bholabhai Patel giving a historical perspective of short story form in his *Bhartiya Toonki Varta* gives a brief overview of the development of short story in fourteen Indian languages (including Indian English). Regarding the emergence he states: '... short story emerged in India in the last decade of nineteenth century and the first-second decade of twentieth.' (9)

Further he states that it was introduced not because of *Hitopadesh* or *Kathasaritsagar* tradition but on the footsteps of western masters as Poe, Hawthorne, Chekhov, Gogol, Maupassant and O'Henry. Yet it nourishes in the social, political, cultural and literary atmosphere of the times. In his words:

The initial phase of short story is the reform age in Indian history. The British rule and English Education had established itself. Along with it a ground for nation awareness was also prepared. All these circumstances influenced literature. Thus there would be didactic tone during such times. There would be emphasis on Indian values. In Tamilnadu along with new subjects stories with Puran subjects were wildly written. Stories were written on new professions, new industries and with the advent of mechanical culture giving rise to cities or their subject. Rabindranath Tagore wrote Post Master in 1891, were too, we have Post Master or Bhaiyadada, which announce the newly introduced railway and communication. Such parallel examples would be found in almost all our languages. (10)

1901 to 1920 was the period of political turmoil with growing awareness of the educated class against the British policies at economical and political fronts. 1905 to 1911 were the years of *Bangbhang* (division of Bengal), regarded as 'divide and rule' policy of the British, it agitated and charged the nationalist pursuit in India with the 'Vande Matram' slogan, religious gatherings (mela) in Bengal to spread all over India. Aurobindo, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Pal, Balgangadhar Tilak pushed for an extremist stand. The national congress found itself divided with Naoroji's soft stance. Gokhle and Tilak balanced the movement where Tilak infused a religious spirit into nationalism. He revived Ganpati festival, using the symbolism of cow, encouraged Akharas and Lathi and adored Shivaji as the first Hindu emperor.

Along with *Bangbhang*, the Rowlatt Act, success of Gandhiji's satyagarha in South Africa and his return to India and Jaliyanwala massacre are some very important episodes of Indian history. On the world scenario is the success of communist manifestos to take over Russia after the August revolution and later the devastating First World War. Gandhi and Marx were the greatest influence in the next two decades to come.

However in this state of turmoil on all fronts and rising nationalist spirit the short stories of first two decades mainly followed the reformist to resist the

fractures at social level. In Gujarati as well as Indian English the stories mentioned in the last two chapters project these social aspects.

Dhansukhlal, the writer of 'Baa' is accepted as the first practitioner of short story in Gujarati with respect of his sustained practice and output, is a story of a disintegrating family. Family has always been the core of Indian culture where the members in a joint family accept the parents as god. *Matru Devo Bhavo*, *Pitru Devo Bhavo* have been the sutras in carrying forward the family structure since ages. The old mother in 'Baa', the story of a widow, is disillusioned by her sons who want to live independently with their wives. The compulsions of the changing times disrupt the family and the values attached to life. The moral degradation and selfish motives of the sons and the daughter-in-laws present the picture of changing times.

In case of Indian English short story we have a *Madhavihs Kushika's Short Stories* (1916) the same social concerns as marriage reforms and such social aspects. B. R. Rajan, Cormelia Sorabji all deal with reformist or moralistic stories. M. K. Naik in the 'Introduction' to the *Indian English short story: a representative anthology* draw our attention at the titles which in themselves declare their moralistic intentions as, 'The Secret of Death', 'The Glory of Devotion', 'The

Manner of Giving', 'The End of Desire', 'Goodness is Happiness', and 'Jnana – The Highest Sacrifice'.

A notable aspect is that almost all the contributors are from south India but nowhere in Indian English stories, have we had a white character. In case of Gujarat except for the whites in administration the physical presence was least felt. While in south India they lived there in the plantations and find a place in stories in south Indian languages as Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu. The literary history in Kannada literature divided the phases as Navodya, the Renaissance (1900-1940) as Pragatisheela, the Progressive movement (1940-1960) and Navya the Modernist phase (1950-1975) and the Post-Navya (1975-to date). Referring to the location and the British presence Vanmala Vishwanath in her introduction to *Representations of the west in the short Fiction from South India in Translation* writes:

The occident has been with us in India as a multi-faceted, many layered political, economic and cultural presence. The nature and extent of the reception of the west has been determined by factories of geography, history, class, caste and gender. The west as a category has served very varied ideological functions depending on these factors ... (4)

Further giving us some idea of this occidental presence she states:

Given a varied form of political governance that existed in British India, it is only natural that British presence was experienced differently in different parts of India and even within each state. The state of Karnataka, in its present geographic Shape came into being only in 1956 after unification prior to 1947; different parts of the region were ruled by different arrangements. While the British ruled over the Mysore province indirectly through Maharaja of Mysore, the Hyderabad Karnataka region through the Nizam of Hyderabad, other parts of Karnataka was under the Jurisdiction of Bombay and Madras presidencies with discrete pocket such as Kodagu (Coorg) being administered by British commissioner.(Vishwanath 4)

It is in the thirties and forties that Short Story form reaches its maturity. Commonly this phase is regarded as Gandhian era. It is after the return of Gandhi that the wind of change mobilizes the masses to attain freedom. Gandhi came with *satyagrah*, *ahimsa* and other public movements and changed the whole perception of the people towards life. Gandhi decolonized the Indian minds by putting forward the resistance that is Indian. He talked in the language that people understood and lived and projected the life rooted in Indian ethos. He took over the minds of the people and emerged a leader, in all spheres of life, all over India. Gandhi's concern for the poor, simplicity, belief in the Indian social structures, centrality of village life and humanitarian angle to dispense



untouchabilities and other evils of the society along with illiteracy especially in woman, and above all use of simple language in literature reflect reflects clearly in the literature of the times.

Umashankar Joshi who himself reflected the Gandhian ideals in his life and literature being a representative writer of the age. Umashankar well expresses the influence of Gandhi and Marx as:

In Mid-thirties the Gandhian and the Marxian ways of thinking seemed to go well together for they shared two important things, anti-imperialism and concern for the have-nots. Rabindranath and Gandhian stalwarts had participated in the progressive writers conferences. The parting of ways came rather much too soon. When during the Second World War the Marxist slogan of people's war assigned an absolutely subsidiary position to Indian patriotic struggle. (Joshi, 2003, 41)

Freud's influence could also be marked in the themes and structures of the short stories written in this time which boldly expressed sex and the unconscious which was a taboo in India.

In assessing the influence of the times in the works it would be difficult to select and leave the writers and their works. To refer to the major writers and their representative story would mean a canonical study which again would go

against the very essence of comparative study where the approach is to decolonize and study the works from the margins. Dalit literature, women writings as well as works though discarded from mainstream critical attention due to their literary value could to be taken up for contextual study. But it was too early to name many woman or a dalit writer or writing to categorise as such. Though the themes and subject of the major writers of the times deal with the issues that prominently reappear in the respective writings. The limited selection of the major writers and trend setting stories in Gujarati and Indian English is to avoid the thematic and other literary value of these writings which have been attempted. In this phase there were no women writers in Indian English while just two in case of Gujarati namely Lilavati Munshi and Sarigini Mehta. There too they do not come up with women issues but mainly sentimental bend. In case of Dalit writings, there was no such category or conscious effort by the writers, yet the pioneers of the regional writer Pannalal Patel, a writer class apart to set a trend in regional writings, will be studied as he comes from the tribal region to represent from the class.

Dhumketu, Dwiref, Meghani, Jayant Khatri, Umashankar Joshi, Sundaram, Jayanti Dalal and Panalal Patel with the trio Mulk Raj Anand, R. K.

Narayan and Raja Rao will be studied to mainly draw on the social, cultural and political aspects.

All the writers listed are celebrated for their contribution to the form, though we should mark that most of them are primarily known as poets, novelists or critics, except Jayant Khatri and Jayanti Dalal who are primarily known as Short Story writers. Dhumketu, who attempted at various prose forms is one of the writers who becomes synonymous to short story form.

Writer's attitude and understanding of the genre can be studied by the critique of the form in case of these writers. Practice of the short story form went through the pains and artistic handling of these writers to develop and mature with their toils. If we look at some Forwards or Introductions written by the writers we shall know the anxiety of the writer to adopt a western modern literary form and make our own by giving it a mark of Indian short story.

The pen name that Gaurishankar Joshi adopts 'Dhumketu' (Commet) is what attracts him to the form that in his own words He looks at the form as a very momentary experience as a lightning or falling of a star. His first three collections were titled as *Tankha Mandal – I, II and III*. With a spark at the end, having record number of around five hundred short stories in twenty four

collections prove his liking for the form. He contradicts his own comments with regards to the merit of a writer, in not intervening and believing in the readers by not saying everything. His early childhood passed in rural parts of Saurashtra around Gondal and was imaginative a child to capture the life around. He was greatly influenced by the Jivraj Joshi's stories, he had heard and being voracious reader had read all the Gujarati historical novels and Narmad. A graduate with English and Sanskrit literature from Mumbai University did not continue in any job and left Gondal for Ahmedabad to lead a life of professional writer and working as a teacher to maintain his family.

Dhumketu was always biased towards the rustic life and its simple people that gave a romantic blend to his writings. These stories are realistic and sentimental to give us a true picture of the times it is set in. '*Bhaiyadada*' is one such story that comes with the tragic figure of an old man '*Bhaiyadada*' who has been working on a rising of a railway living all alone in a small room all his life. The story opens with a young officer who represents the changing mechanical times to tell that the old man is too old for the railway service. Contrasted against '*Bhaiyadada*' who is attached to the place where he has passed all his life in that wilderness has nowhere to go. The juxtaposition of the rural and the urban is done with artistic detail. The train and the railway station are signatives of

change that provide background to the young railway officer on the other hand the goat, the vegetation and the small girl adds to the locale that throbs and symbolizes the cultural context that Dhumketu has been with. He belonged to Gondal state where there was state railway and he himself had joined in the railway service but left.

Bhaiyadada's words prove true that 'I will not leave this place till I am alive' but the irony is that he breaths his last in that dwelling. It is also a document to show that how the new development uproot the old ethos. Such a well told (written) story is criticized for its end where Dhumketu is too explicit to leave a few things 'unsaid'.

Meghani as discussed in the second chapter has contributed much by documenting the folk literature of Gujarat. Most of his stories are the stories he had heard as a researcher and putdown in written form. The use of language that was in the colloquial use is employed to give a major shift to literature as a whole when the distinction between a language. Meghani like J. M. Sing had seen the Saurashtra life so closely that 'Vahu ane Ghodo' (The Wife and the Horse) is present the inner glimpses of social realities of upper class which is on surface a dream to be achieved as in case of the heroine, Tara, in her teens looking at the beautiful coach driven by a strong horse prays, 'Oh! God make me the daughter-

in-law of that Sheths house ...' Tara, the narrator writes of the state of a daughter-in-law of the upper class houses. Meghani shocks the reader by unfolding the aspect such as sexual harassment of the husband suffering from sexual disease which not many would think of. All the taunts and torments that bears and the characters as Ratanma who in her typical tone of a village granny stops her destroying the spider webs and the swamp hales as, 'Stop it, stop it, Sinner! or else in the next birth you will be born as the horse of Prataprai of his daughter-in-law.' The dialogue is the product of a culture where even to kill an ant is a sin. The illiterate rural folk speak of the values in their own typical way. The taunts of the women folk is suggestive of few women add to the misery of women. The symbolic use of the lamp and the horse are noteworthy for the story ends in Tara's finding her self with the horse. The daughter-in-law died one after the other and horses change after being over work. The story is a good insight in the world of women in the upper class society where death is the only escape. Meghani is a writer in folk tradition but this story is in his times and documents the situation of women with the use of images that are specific to the locale. Meghani's early youth spent in Bengal and emerging as a nationalist poet in itself leads to conclude that the concerns about the women's standard of living and the social evil that subject them are as yet the subject for the writer since Narmada's

time who wrote '*Stri Kelavani*', an elaborate essay on women education some seventy year back.

The most distinct among the short story writers of Gandhian era is R. V. Pathak well known as a critic but when it comes to short story he is popularly known as *Dwiref*. In his forward he explains his pen name as:

I will have to give you the meaning of '*Dwiref*', the literal meaning of the word is large black bee. I do not see honey all around in the world and many of my stories will be bitter. I am not a bee in the literal sense but by chance as in case of '*bhramar*' my name too has two 'R's. (9)

More important is his comment in the same forward that 'I have never been able to consider story writing as my major activity...and I feel what to boast of such minor and impulsive activity.' (9) The above statement by the writer is in reply to a critic who wants *Dwiref* to reveal his real name, where he calls short story writing minor and impulsive to give us a clue as to how this form as yet is not accepted as one among other genres.

*Dwiref*'s clarity in case of practice of the form is evidence as to how periodicals played a very important role in development of the form. R. V.

Pathak gives us a good idea as to how actually this periodical played their role in shaping the form as well as the writer:

By the end of 1922 or beginning of 1923 a student friend came to me for an article for a handwritten magazine Kallol. Earlier I had seen a story written by a lecturer in that monthly. Seeing that I also felt like writing a story for the private monthly. I had read a story in Strand Magazine before some years. According to the science of memory some impressions were there in my mind. One aspect is that if any one has done something, 'I too could have done it', comes to almost everyone, secondly, the thought gets so rooted that 'It is me who did it' is the illusion that is created. To make this rule concrete I dragged out a small story (Ek Prashna) for that person. On a demand for a story by Yashwan Pandya for Veena, I got a copy from Kallol, shaped it a bit and published it in Veena. There was a controversy that it was written in regards to a problem of a literary project in its time of publication but it was just a coincident.

The real responsibility to write short story was enthreshed when *Yugdharm* was being published. I began writing short stories when it was decided to add a story section in *Yugdharm*. This activity continued till *Yugdharm* continued, and stopped as *yugdharm* stopped again started with launching of *Prasthan*. (8)

The excerpt above would help outline the activities of literary writing in context of the periodical. It also proves to be a document in case of writers



seriousness about the form (He did not disclose his pseudonym, 'Dwiref' till the publication of his first collection '*Dwirefni Vato*' for which the forward is written). Dwiref is known to write in a higher vein, humour that is elevated with insight in to human behaviour. Dwiref mainly borrows from the oral tradition. He in fact tells stories.

*'Mukundrai'* by Dwiref is a path breaking story in Gujarati Literature. It is a tragic story constructs the contrast in the old and new value system founded on the cultural ground. It highlights the holocaust of times where the new generation is swept away from the old as a result of English education and urban culture. The rural and the urban cultures are presented with utmost details.

The story is the tragedy of Ragnath a traditional Brahmin who is jolted by the change in his son who comes to the village with his friends in college vacations.

The story begins with the description of a typical village at ease. The changing village is marked by 'newly opened tea shop', the local with a few shops of Baniyas. The telegram that in itself symbolizes the modern communication is well used to disturb Raghunath a Sanskrit scholar forced to go to a banya's son who had learnt English enough to calculate and read telegrams.

The joy that the son Mukundrai was coming with his friend on holidays is well displayed as the father and the daughter at once start preparing for their meals. The question as, 'Shall we prepare ladoos?' Is enough to express what guests mean in any house hold, but the reply by the young widow daughter/sister, 'No, Bhai doesn't like laddoo, he likes *shira* more, as he had said once ...' is suggestive of the hospitality for which the people are known for and of their caring, simple and emotional tie, and what the blood relations means to their existence.

The story bulges with the cultural codes that unfold the way of life of people in the remote village. On the other hand it brings out the neglect of the same due to the influence of new valueless education system as soon as Mukundrai steps into the village.

The environment of the college where 'liberal atmosphere', 'no worry of exams in first year', Mukund's interest in 'Tennis', 'Ladies', 'Fashionable youth', 'Miss Gupta', 'laboratory', 'taste', 'pent and tie', 'the art of seeming rich' are iconic to represent the invading changes ... Mukundrai's disgust for the house, the sister, father and all that is around speaks of the degradation. He imposes himself to act as if he is out of place from the same he was brought up with. His arrogance towards the father, his pride in throwing a rupee at the oxen cart

person, lavishness speaks of the characteristics of modern times. The writer narrator sums up this behavior as: 'Unwanted smiles to equals and unwanted arrogance towards unequal are the characteristics of modernity.' (72)

The change of values in case of respect for woman is also reasoned out and discussed leaving beside the social codes where women are looked up as mother or sister.

His replies to Raghunath, request to write an application for Kasalchand is denounced dramatically. His arguments to buy a new tennis racket ending in his blunt suggestion to sell off land are in extreme opposition to the local life where no one can dare to dream of.

Lastly the story ends in the traditional way where the unspeakable and understable can be expressed through mythically. It reminds one of Raja Rao who employs this strategy to end his *Comrad Kirillov*. Adding to the effect of turmoils that Raghunath and Ganga are facing, where the old father speaks of his loss as 'He is no more ours!' ... 'Yes, he can not be ours, take it, he is gone.' (78) In such a desperate situation Raghunath tells Ganga a story of Vimalshah who asks Goddess Amba soon to wipe out his lineage. The writer ends the story with

hopelessness keeping with the deformed state of life due to the cultural fractures in the colonial times.

Comparatively long story presents the anxiety of the transition period in the times when the effects of western culture as presented through the college culture and Mukundrai's behaviour give insights into the cultural and social conflicts that had come to surface.

Umashankar's 'Forward' to *Sharaswati Melo* (1937) is yet again apt for a case study to reveal the aspects that go into practice where the writer an established poet and attempting at one act plays uses the 'borrowed' name 'Vasuki' (penname) with an imagined fear initially that individualism poems and one act plays were written under his name so again if the stories are published the same way then possibly some might feel that why is he trying to indulge in all literary forms.

Regarding the beginnings he puts it as part of experimentations with different forms. Umashankar Joshi modestly speaks as to how it was like while teaching short story in the class room that added to the interest for it and also that a teacher's comment that he was always talking and not doing anything also instigated him to the form.

Though he restricts to critique on the short story form by saying that instead why not write a story! Though it is a short 'Forward' it brings to light an important aspect that a short story can not be a work of art if it doesn't elevate the personal experience to universal.

Umashankar has successfully employed the rural language of the local that he was born in some of his stories along with the elite Gujarati where he presents the hostilities and their struggle. His best few years have been discussed earlier but '*Pagli no Pardhar*' draws our attention to the social taboo of how in craving for a boy child. It takes the possession of Shantaram waiting for her daughter-in-law to give birth to a son after four daughters. The taboo is artistically used to show the psychological effect in a person. Though the much discussed end in case of the artistic handling of the form can be regarded a shift where the story could not have ended in any other way. Umashankar in fact adds to the aspect of brevity to the form in case of this story even though there are so many characters from his household, neighbours, Nathu Bhuvu and a gathering at the end and each having a dialogue to add to Shantaram's misery, yet it does not loosen in structure or length.

'Sundaram' the pen name of Tribhuwandas Luhar as a poet, is so popular that 'Trishul' the name he adopted as a short story writer. He studied in

Vidhyapith under great masters as R.V. Pathak and Kalekar influence by the Gandhian joined the freedom moment since 1930. Upto the Independence and later turning to an Aurobindite, two comes from a village Miyamatar a village of Bharuch. His biographical details and some critical comments are available through an interview by Ramanlal Joshi for a radio programme in 1979. His answers to a few questions are notable to add to our knowledge of his times and his works as:

1. What are the memories of Gujarat of your childhood days?

Gujarat of my childhood meant Gujat that a child's mind understands. ... in very early days that school outside the village was a far off thing. To go to another village was like a big thing, so the larger idea of Gujarat evolved only after going to Talad for studies. Ahmadabad was as far as fantasy.

But life around was representative of life of Gujarat. The marked three divisions of seasons of Gujarat were experienced in its total intensity. The life in Gujarat was based on castes. And every caste had a distinct impression in ones mind. So the people from the lower strata to Brahmins and to bavas each had a peculiar picture of its own. Gujarat's life economy was clearly defined. Farmers farm, Baniyas do business, Brahmins do prayers and rituals, artisans do their own work ... Politically the Government body was main. The impact was felt, with

nationalism there was a new glimpse ... critics mere the activities were felt, political movements were witnessed and gradually there was clarity in the literary world ... (Kadia 48-49)

We mark that his short stories are commonly interpreted as products of the progressive movement. His stories as well as poems sing of the downtrodden class and dispise the wealthy class. To a question, "You were also engaged in progressive literary movement today what is your view?", he says:

The word 'progressive' had come to us due to the sweep then. And not to break the enthusiasm of my colleagues I had supported them. Today as well as in those times by using the term 'progressive' we are not going to add anything worthy in creation of poetry. (Dalal, 2007, 5)

Answering a question on his attraction for other forms then poetry he replied that he took them up very naturally and worked hard. Every literary form has its own uniqueness. There is no question of interest but pleasure to have attempted it.

And what it is to attempt at a short story and what an ecstasy it is, he states, as stated by Suresh Dalal from Tapovan:

...the fear that I experienced attempting at the first story that fear is felt more intensely while writing the last story. That fear is of the complex art of short story writing. There is such a lussure to commit mistakes that having written a successful story is to believe that it is like a reward of art. (Dalal, 2007, 4)

*'Pakard no Pravas'* and *Kholaki* and *'Maja Vela nu Mutyu'* discussed in detail but yet would make a mention that the character such as Maja Vela, a man on footpath with a family of thirty is an artistic creation in itself. He lives and dies with pride in that long life struggling against the dark realities of slumdweller's life; writer succeeds in winning the favor of the readers by presenting the commonly abused class who too live and die life human beings. The lowest strata have its own values and ethos that not many wed to do people can live up to. We see Maja Vela as a head of a family, keeping them together.

Maja Velo doesnot pay heed to the fever and smoking away a cigarette with kids. A range of aspects show his concerns for his family members. Later his annoyance at knowing that these kids have never seen suffering thinks of their bleak future. A man may wish to live long for hundreds of reasons but here Maja Vela wishes to show them that sweet. His faith in himself and God are expressed when Khodi a great grand daughter named after Goddess Khodiar Maa come to him and he dies remembering the Goddess through calling out Khodi.Sundaram



can see these people living and leading a life that is usually compared to the dogs.

Pannalal Patel as discussed is the pioneer of regional writings in Gujarati. In contrast to all the writers discussed earlier who had higher education. Pannalal was not fortunate enough and had to leave school due to economical compulsion. He was a born story teller and mastered the modern form by shaping it to his mould in bringing alive the local with its people and culture. He was not read but the stories that he heard in his childhood and the life that he left behind when in Ahmedabad eared him to attempt on the form to give a realistic regional writing to inspire and influence the times to come.

He represents the north Gujarat region and the peasantry. 'Maa' among his shortest story, not much discussed brings to fore the question of survival and ethics. It's only a writer like Pannalal who could come up with the subject of killing a he-calf of the buffalo which is very common in rural Gujarat. The bull (of a buffallow) is not used for agriculture in Gujarat and thus is taken away and thrown away to get ummmediately after the birth, or starved to death. The irony is that it is the women folk that manage this infanticide. 'Maa' the title itself is used ironically. For a poor farmer's house hold it is a compulsion to kill a he-calf in order to meet their needs. The seemingly cold blooded mother in the story is

most realistically presented with all the guilt that a mother's heart would feel but can not express under the compulsions of the poor state and years of experience. Her movement reveals her anxiety but suppresses it with the words to meet the crude realities.

All the writers discussed belong to different regions of Gujarat and what they represent is the life lived by common or even below that class with the growing social, political and cultural awareness in the colonial period which was soon to come to an end.

In the case of Gujarati short story writers they saw that the form and content was central to them adding to this the Indian English writers naturally conscious of their use of English language as medium of expression. They had a range of precursors who had already proved it to their use. In these figures Swami Vivekanand, Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore, we can see a creative response to the presence of the west, to British rule and English language. In each of these three figures the articulations of Indian nationhood was done ironically in English though all three wrote in Bengali as well. . Citing Vivekanand, Tagore and Aurobindo Mahan Ramanan in his introduction to *Nineteenth century Indian English Prose* states:

... English is a key element in this derivative discourse ... English is both language and ideology. Tagore's insistence of Bengali or Swami Vivekanand's obvious love for the native provenance did not prevent them from using English effectively and Sri Aurobindo's capacity to indianise English making a mantric tool for his epic efforts, enables a realization that the English language need not be a barrier for perception and expression of a native idiom. (27)

Before discussing the major Indian English writers let us also see how the regional writers who adopted the western forms and notions under the influence of the western masters in literature and as well as view of life under the awe British. As in case of Indian English writers the writers in regional languages too had their limitations to present the local scene faithfully under the influence of the west. K. Raghvendra Rao in 'Translation the Fate of Colonial Bilingualism' comments on this issue as:

While the fate of the bilingualism of the English writer in English is relatively visible, that of the writers in the Indian languages is opaque. But once we try to penetrate this thin layer of opacity, we can see that he, too, shared the fate of his fellow writer in English. While the historical weight of colonial culture came to be visibly condensed in the English language, for the writers in the Indian languages this heritage could not naturally take the form of language. Yet, they might appear to escape the fate of the Indian writer in English on the surface, but

did they really escape it? Of course not. It is true that they avoided the English language, but they could not avoid the content of the culture and ideology encapsulated in the English literary tradition as colonially presented to them. Instead of writing English works in English, they wrote them in Telugu or Kannada or Bengali. Their Indianness, no less than that of the Indian writer in English, was equally compromised. That is why it is difficult to understand the literary movements in the Indian languages in the colonial and post-colonial periods without taking into account their ultimate roots which lay in an ill-digested English literary culture and an alienised Indian literary tradition. I am suggesting that they, too, translated, but unlike in the case of the English writer in India, who translated both linguistic form and content, they translated only the content. (90)

All the three major and short story writers Anand, Narayan and Raja Rao too transplanted English in the native soil to Indian the master's language.

Anand born in Peshawar, then the part of united Punjab province of undivided India came from a copper smith family. His father joined the army to leave the traditional trade. Anand educated in London and Cambridge. Instead of joining the teaching profession he took to writing. As discussed in the earlier chapter he was ideologically with the leftist and actively participated in progressive writer's movement. Though not directly involved in politics, it was

through his writing that he served the purpose to present the Indian life rationally without being emotional about the cultural context in a realistic wail. In his contemporary times though Gandhi had marked his presence in the political social and cultural scene it was just the beginning and no change was realized in case of the social injustice and discrimination, the status of an individual that was bound by the tradition and customs. Women's condition, caste system with humiliation due to untouchability and other social practices, illiteracy and the wide gap between the rich and poor are largely the concerns of the writer. Venugopal while delimiting on themes of Anand states:

The themes and subjects of Anand are thus mainly aimed at depicting social situation as seen and felt by individual. More often than not, Anand's individual finds himself in an inevitable situation, being victim of effect traditions and cruel customs, a corrupt social order or a heartless administration... Anand aims at humanist cords of the reader's heart, with a message that only a concerted effort can overheat the non-too-happy present social situation. (50)

In 'Barbar's Trade Union', Anand brings forth the issues of rigid cartest social structure which is presented with behaviorious narration. Taking a care of village and a barber boy Chandu as the real hero is best set to unfold the caste hierarchy in our society. Here we may mark as to how the same Indian village is

presented as a happy interdependent and self dependent a unit where all that problems are due to the foreign influence which in contrast Anand draws attention to the problems due to the practices within. Chandu is so real that every village has such a character, which would with his intelligence want to do what others do and also actively contribute. As we find how he can innocently think of the sports and game to lead in his age group. Learn to ride a bicycle. The courage to change and adopt the new thing or situation is projected as basis for the stride he is to take in future to revolutionize the system. The central issue is to draw our attention to the age old caste system that governed every walk of our life from social status, to economical as the castes decide and limit a person's prospect. Through Chandu many a limitation that the lower caste has is presented in the lighter vain. Chandu's mother's response, at his demands to buy a coat and pent, projects this class distinction and its rigidity. The trades or profession were also looked at as high and low to place a person in a particular class. The artisans as potters, carpenters, black-smiths, barbers, tailors, masons, were subjected under the patronage of the upper class as they were directly dependent on them in their own village. In Gujarat the word degenerative term Vasavya is used which means who have been settled in the village (under the patronage of the rich). This limits them to a village resulting in permanent subjection.

The story ironically brings on the importance of every trade. When Chandu goes to a landlord's house in his new attire with a leather bag he is shouted at as: 'Get away! Get away! You useless one! Don't come any near, or I'll have to treat the whole house with a sacred crowding to purify it'. (4)

The result is:

...for now they are seen moving about with clumsy over grown beards, a fascinating funny sight for the village urchins, looking more like presents and Chandu convinces all the barbers within the elders of the village come to them to be shave than they should dance attendants upon their.(9)

Chandu here emerges as the leader and organizer, realizing the masters-slave relation that is accepted traditionally as interdependence is now being responded a historic a feat to break the traditions and moving out of the village and start his shop where people would come to him rather than 'dance attendance upon their masters'. It is a revolutionary story that doesn't limit itself to projecting a problem but also finding a solution. Anand, without a word of grudge or arrogance throughout the story, with just a single character it brings forth the concerns and change. The clarity of social structure and inbuilt power structures helps to penetrate the centre from the margins where Chandu belongs.

R. K. Narayan, from a journalist background is more discussed as a pure artist who has no intension to write but present life as he observes and loves to look at little things that make it livable and loving. He has no complaints, no suggestions and thus no agenda. Many critics regard this as his limitation not to be concerned with the aspects that whole nation was driven to at the times of national freedom movements.

With a journalistic background and the influence of Indian tradition traditional narrative Narayan develops a technique to present the local, the charaters and episodes with utmost simplicity and economy. The common locale (of Malgudi) and very common character that we meet daily in our common spoils on footpaths, in shops, in institution, offices and their ordinary crises with a touch of humour and irony does not lead us to look at the the uncommon, the tragic and extraordinary.

Narayan moulds even the English language to present the India life by detailing his observation of the local, characters, customs habits, situations, expressions, actions and gestures that are commonly the part of life. The narrative technique he employees is keeping with the Indian oral tradition of abrupt beginnings and simple omnipresent narration or a character within the story narrates as is the case of talkative man in Narayan. He ends most of his



stories with resolution of the crisis so to say a happy end which too keeps with the Indian tradition. What he restricts himself with is his trivializing the character situation and crisis to draw humour and familiar the three which leaves little scope to moralize directly.

Yet the works can be looked at with all the context of social and cultural aspects that the story provide to take the case of Swami-story 'Father's Help' from *Malgudi days* we can decode it in that crisis of the Swami school going boy in Malgudi.

At first the semi-urban town and its rustic ways becomes the locale of urban life but the characters seem not too urbanized. It also presents the early phase of the process of urbanization which can be looked at as new structures and their impacts on rural or local without going back to it for the readers. (Especially Indian readers, while for the foreign readers the then present state was in itself distinct.)

The interest of the reader in 'Father's Help' is that what will happen to swami and the amusement is the unexpected reaction of teachers as well as the father presented comic reversals. But if we account to the reason why swami doesn't want to go to school on Monday morning it is the westernised institution

called mission school. School is a symbol of new education system, the Christian school and the Christian teachers who are (or are imagined to be) tyrant. Within the house it is the father who is dreaded while the mother is in the background. The position the child's view of the tall school buildings are the power structures. Where ever there is a use of irony we can unfold these structures the very displeasure as it is looked at as confinement unnatural for young tender child against the fantasy of every child to be free to do what ever it likes as the beast that grow up in primitive wilderness or to think of the Gurukul system in our tradition where the education was imparted through practical experiences.

Raja Rao on the other extreme of Anand looks at India in spiritual and cultural context. He too has a mission but with the change in angle of perception he looks at the Indian culture that has its life source in spirituality. The values that are cherished traditionally and their deeper meanings are the major concerns of Raja Rao. In doing so as a professor of philosophy he was well read in scriptures and well versed with Indian literary tradition. He breaks from the western literary tradition it has emerged from. He does not translate the language but the situations that can be experienced.

'Javni', is an artistic piece to take the reader to a region that has no barrier of caste or creed. Javni, a miserable widow of a washer man, debased to a state of

beastly life if we see on the surface is realized as, 'in contact with a heart like yours, who will not bloom in to a God!' (M. K. Naik: 76) If studied for the social prospect it might lead us to despise all that befalls on Javni due to social taboos of widowhood, caste system, poverty etc. There even is the discussion of the issues of untouchability and superstition discussed by Ramappa but what Ramappa could finally see in the wretched figure is ever loving, all compassionate soul. The story opens with an epitaph, a quotation by Kanakdas:

Caste and caste and caste you say,

What caste has he who knows god? (Cowajee 60)

The story presents the local of rural Karnataka region which is so well translated consciously, to bring to light all that might be looked at as primitive, filthy, orthodox, uncivilized, land of snakes, castes and widows, cows and bullock carts, huts and temples, or area of darkness. But the character of Janvi if looked at superficially might be an object of our pity instead what we realize is that by the end of the story that she has the pure soul that can transform others. Half way the story Ramappa looking at the sky at night can see the existence in wholeness as:

I walked into the garden and stood looking at the sparkling heavens. There was companionship in their shining. The small and the great clustered together in the heart of the quite limpid sky. God, knew their caste? (Cowajee 69)

'Javni' and 'Akkaya' might project social and political interest of the writer as Makarand Paranjape in his preface to fictions: Raja Rao puts it as, 'Javni' and 'Akkayya' are good examples. Comment not only on the caste system or position of women in Indian society, but also show the values, heroism, courage, wisdom and loyalty in life.

'Javni' ends in the most traditional fashion where Javni is elevated to a stature to become legendary, mythical and spiritual. The story ends with a basic metaphysical question that seeks the answer:

Till we were on the other bank, I could see Javni letting on the rock, and looking towards us. In my heart I still seem her, and across the blue waters of the river and the last, vast sky above her, she seemed so small, just a spot in space, recedingly real. Who was she? (Cowajee 80)

The Indian story writers have mastered the traditional technique they inherit it with their canvass with Indian local the rural and the urban. Social aspects always have been the focal point for writers in the pre-Independence times. The writers discussed in this chapter consciously attempted the form and contributed to the growth and development of this youngest literary genre to pass it on all mature and rooted in the soil to give it a distinct identity of Indian short story.

Finally E.V.Ramakrishan's evaluation of Indian short story in the in the right perspective as the cultural, social and political document of the pre-Independence times is noteworthy to sumup the discussion as:

I would like to underline the fact that the direction taken by the Indian short story in the first half of the twentieth century does indicate the democratisation of the literary sphere. The movement is towards greater inclusiveness and openness. If the concern with the rural life recurs in these stories it is because the pressures of urbanisation are yet to be felt on large scale. The awareness about social disparity, the rage against injustice, and the struggle against colonialism reflect the ideas and motives that animated the public sphere in the first half of the century. These stories should also be read as documentary evidence of a collective popular will operating in the charting of a nation's identity. They document the trials and traumas attending the self-definition of emergent societies. This is not to discount the fact that the sheer delight of telling and listening to stories should remain the highest reward of any volume of stories. These are stories that need to be read again and again to remind us what we were, where we came from and in what direction we had set out. (xxviii)

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## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

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Indian short story, in almost all Indian languages, emerged with the dawn of twentieth century. It is also the case with Gujarati and Indian English short story. As a genre it is last to emerge regarded as the younger form. In India the British rule, English education, printing technology and rise of periodicals introduced the western modern form especially in prose during nineteenth century. The nineteenth century witnessed spread of British political power with East India Company in the first half and later after 1857 it was directly subjected under the British crown. With the demand of the times great range of renaissance minds as Raja Rammohan Roy to Gandhi brought about the reawakening of the nation. The socio-religious institutions as Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prarthna Samaj, and Ramakrishna Mission played a major role in awakening of social, cultural, religious, ethnical and national consciousness of the masses. The new educated (mainly English educated) crop of Indians, spirited with reformist zeal, found essay form and journalistic writing handy for their purpose. By the end of the century all most all the prose form as essay, biography, autobiography,

travelogues, criticism, journalist writings, diary letters and novel were attempted and experimented in Indian literature.

Literature in all Indian languages was entering the new age commonly termed as modern the phase was a shift from medieval to modern i.e. poetry to prose. In the last two decades of nineteenth century short story too marked its vague presence through adaptations from oral folk narratives and popular tales stored in the memories since ancient times. Translations were specially for the use of school like the translation of Chambers short stories India has a rich tradition of story telling. The Vedas, *Upanishadas*, *Puranas*, *Panchtantra*, *Kathasaritsagar*, *Jatak Katha*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, legends, folk narratives were the inherited treasure with India that kept alive the Hindu way of life and culture through the oral tradition. The earliest attempts were to translate this memorised store house of knowledge in oral tradition to written. The titles of the late nineteenth century anthologies in English as well as Gujarati are suggestive of the fact.

Indian short story in its fifty years of growth passed through the most vigorous times of unrest through reform, reflection, introspection, reactions, and resistance and public movements during pre-Independence times. The growth and development largely reflect the influence of the social, historical, political,

economical and cultural developments in the first two decades the form was definitely shaped by the writers who wrote with the reform movements of the nineteenth century. Social problems, love entangles and moral ending stories found place in periodicals for pastime reading. The publication of the path breaking 'Govalani' the short story comes to its own to break with the reformist and moralist bounds.

In case of Gujarati short story as discussed in chapter two we note that there is no break in writing since 1910. Dhansuklal Mehta, K. M. Munshi, Lilavati Munshi was a few writers with social themes. It is the third decade where short story reaches its maturity. R. V. Pathak and Dhumketu present a realistic picture of life with stress on characterization description of local the humanitarian aspects, depiction of the on going change with changing villages and above all a conscious use of the form. Dhumketu as referred to has written short stories for four decades to be rightly recognised as the synonym for Gujarati short story. A serious attempt at the form is visualized for the first time in Dwiref and Dhumketu. The Gandhian influence and rising nationalistic spirit is quite evident through their use of language that was understood by a common man the local that one felt was part of it, while Dhumketu is emotional and poetic in

expression Dwiref is more balanced with a psychoanalytic insights in the characters.

The trio, Sundaram, Umashankar and Snehrashni—primarily poets-attempt at the form that was very close to lyric. Along with Gandhian humanism and anti-capitalism the progressive movement added to the literature a bent towards presenting the economical divide of the downtrodden against the wealthy in contrast. With Meghani and Gunvantrai who could go closer to the local and its language with their close study of folk life and literature. Contribution Meghani is a case study of the revivalist literature in development of form that largely rely on the traditional folk language and literature.

A new trend of regional writings develops with Pannalal Patel, Petlikar, Pitambar Patel and Chunilal Madia. They write of their specific local to bring alive the life of the local they have lived. The region specific stories and their characters are deep rooted in the culture that reflects the values and ethos of rural life. The regional writers detailing the earlier attempts of writes in employing the dialectic language that add to the over all affect. Jayant Khatri is the writer of the transitory phase before the New Short story was to give a major shift to eraser the centrality of happening in a story

The third chapter deals with the growth and development of short story in Indian English literature. Early attempts in case of Indian English short story was again the compilations of fables and tales mainly written by Bengali writers and published from London Keeping in mind the foreign readership. Such early attempts were made by writers as Soshee Chandar Dutt, P.V. Ramswami Raju, Khetarpal Chakrawati, Kamala Setunathan, and Rajan Ayyar.

Cornilia Sorabji is the first writer to write originally retelling her experiences of her meeting the woman folk as a lawyer. She projected the life behind the veil as related by her clients to frame it in short story form with a considerable out put of four anthologies in the first decade of nineteenth century. S.M.Natesha, Dwijendra Neogi, Madheviah and Devy were major contributors to practice the short story form though crude during the second decade. They did succeed in attempting at the presentation of Indian scene with the use of local idioms and nuances.

The chapter largely discusses the development of the form and contribution to the form in thirties by the three major Indian English writers, Mulkraj Anand, R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao. With their creative talent the short story form in its infancy was nourished and matured to get a distinct identity as the Indian English short story. The trio wrote with their individual ideological

stands and view of life. Anand and Rao on the two extremes with a leftist and the rightist bents respectively while Narayan in the journalistic tradition is regarded an apolitical writer writing for the sake of art. The major contribution of these writers is their presentation of Indian life by moulding the language to their use. The techniques they employ Keeping to the inherited tradition of story telling with the precise use of the modern form in bringing about the little integrities of life to philosophical renderings.

Anand's with leftist bent expresses the plight of the lower class people subjected under the social and cultural and political systems. R.K.Narayan who loves life around is a keen observer of trivialities of life with a range of fascinating characters from day-to-day semi-urban life of India through Malgudi. His art lies in his simple narrative that makes his stories readable with humour and irony to add to the artistic presentation. Rao is regarded as a serious writer for whom writing is *sadhana* .He take a flight from realism to the metaphysical world of his perceptive of India. He perceives life as a common Indian could perceive and his characters however miserable they seem are elevated to be more than simple physical identities to radiate the inward spirituality. Raja Rao uses the cultural and spiritual symbols to create modern myths for the young form which is suggestive of the experimentation and serious practice of form. Three of

them contributed in a sustainable way to the language and form for more than three decades.

The last comparative chapter discusses the basic issues related to the comparative studies in India and the concerns at attempting a comparative study of the rise and development of short story form during pre-Independence times in Gujarati and Indian English literatures. Indian literature can naturally or best be studied comparatively. India a multilingual a state with changing geographical state boundaries and uneven historical and social developments due to its vastness gets its integrated identity of 'India' because of its culture. The geographical, social, political, historical, linguistic, and all other various identities merge in the cultural identity that is the way if life. The very idea of Indian literature is comparative in nature. Comparative study has passed through various stages in different continents with its own specific area of application. It evolved with general aspects of the ideal of world literature to disintegrate in to various fields of specialisations, or in other words, from multidisciplinary to specialisation. From influence study to bibliographical, archival to formalistic, culture to translation studies. We are at the verge where the comparative critics are pronouncing the end of comparative discipline with the subsidiary disciplines are establishing as core or central. Area studies one



more western construct is undermining the national-specially in vase if former colonies in the post colonial times—wherein in ‘south Asia’ India is the major contributor.

The construct of ‘Indian literature’ has evolved since the oriental scholars used it in a limited way for classical Sanskrit literature to the most complex of all literatures where there are multiplicities of geographical, social, political, historical, and linguistic equations along with the emergence of modern Indian languages and its use in the crisscross of western influence. The Indian literary traditions have kept alive its identity even while turning to the western forms. Only comparative study can lead us to closely study and evaluate the Indian literatures holistically. It is the social and cultural and to an extent political study of the times and its reflection in its literatures in different languages that in the true sense give a real idea of Indian life and literature.

Each and every advocate and critic of comparative study has raised the issue of the very identity and methodology of comparative study in India with a repeatedly asked a question as to have we have any distinct school of to call it ‘Indian school of comparative literatures’?, as is the case with French, American, Russian, African or European schools. The answer can be sought from the very concept if Indian literature with its multilingual and multiple complexities due to

its ancient heritage and geographical vastness. Comparative study with the aspects as genre, folk, nativist, marginal, regional, culture, socio-political, translation, poetics, structural and any critical aspect from textual to contextual studied could be attempted considering two or more Indian languages. Multilingual situation lands us easily to take up multidisciplinary study.

Every nation passes through the ups and the downs, glory and ruin but whenever India had been distracted from its paved path to uphold the ideals of spirituality there always have been great minds who directed the nation as a whole to its life source. Nineteenth century proved to the worst in case of the degeneration under the colonial takeover of the empire with its all influencing structures that aimed at uprooting India culturally. In the times of great crises there naturally came forth a range of great minds to resist and react. India withstood the wave of western supremacy with the undercurrent of its spiritual identity. All the historical or political upheavals were subordinate to the cultural and spiritual aspects. Even social reforms could only be thought of in the spiritual context. The same is reflected in art and literature.

The early of short story form in Gujarati as well as English was in a way as adaptations or translations of popular folk tales and stories from scriptures. Even the similarity in case of the first short story is so striking that in both literatures it

appeared in the same year at the dawn of the twentieth century. So is the influence of times in the first two formative decades that most of the stories were to a large extent reformist in nature with social problems or a tinge of humour to be recommended for lighter reading. The periodicals played an important role in development of the form as is the case with short stories world over. Periodicals gave a space to the short stories and at times the creative writers were compelled to write stories because of their affiliation with the periodicals. The number of periodicals referred to in the earlier chapters gives us a good idea of its popularity and also are the resource to the archival study.

It is by the third decade that we have short story grounding to maturity with serious attempts by the masters who too experimented and perfected the form in Gujarati and Indian English. Dhumketu and Dwiref explored the form to such an extent to be remembered today as short story writers. Anand, Narayan and Raja Rao too took the form in their fold to perfect it to an extent that they sustained the practice up to the last decades of the last century. The conscious attempts reflect in the prefaces (as discussed in the fourth chapter) to their anthologies where they come with insights into making and understanding of the form.

The characteristic feature of the short stories in the beginning was the romantic air, common man's predicament, social entangles, and the most important of all is the language that brought alive the realistic picture of Indian scene. Gujarati writers in order to draw the realistic picture of life turned away from the *Shisht* (elitist) Gujarati of Pandit Yug and shaped the written language from their day-to-day usages. While in case of the Indian English writers Vivekananda, Aurobindo and Tagore had proved their mastery in acquiring and using it creatively but it is the writers to follow who transformed the foreign tongue to Indianise it in order to fictionalise Indian scene.

Gujarati as well as Indian English writers adapted to the form with regards to the times. They depicted the contemporary scenario of clash of values due to the progress in industrialisation that was irresistible to influence the Indian life that flourished as rural life. Ambalal Desai, Malaynil, Dhansukhlal Mehta, Dhumketu, Dwiref, Meghani and the contemporaries contextualized the scene by depicting the village as well as the urban peasantry as well as urban middle class to draw realistically on the social values with individualist aspects that fractured the ethos.

The depiction of local with all its colours is the success of the Indian writers in the shorter canvas that demands precise and artistic use of language.

The untranslatable cultural and colloquial was well adopted and translated with retaining of words and phrases, idioms and usages and experimenting with the language to make it flexible for the generation of writers to follow. Gujarati literature has a wide range of writers from Dhumketu to the poets like Umashankar and Sundaram and to follow was the age of regional writers as Pannalal Patel and others. While the Indian English writers major contribution is the use of language. The untranslated from the writers native language is the marker of the culture specific items that make and mould the language to ones own use.

The marked difference that we find between Gujarati and Indian English short story is the number of writers and the out put by the writers. In case of Gujarati literature it is not easy to take note of the writers and the stories which is in such a great number that no such exhaustive bibliography is possible or it would be a big challenge for any researcher. Even the number of major writers is much larger in comparison to Indian English. No poets are notable in Indian English during the first half of the twentieth century to contribute to the short story form as is the case with Gujarati literature where well known poets of national stature like Meghani, Umashankar, and Sundaram not only contributed but have given the finest of the stories.

The difference of medium of language too influences the practice of the short story. The Gujarati writers have region specific target readers while the Indian English writers the readership is the English educated class of readers as well as the English speaking world abroad. A Gujarati writer is at advantage and ease to communicate to a reader close by while contrary in case of Indian English writer who need extra efforts and skills to familiarise or contextualise. The reason that regional writing in Gujarati seems to develop naturally at a particular stage in forties as is the case with other Indian languages while in case of Indian English it is not region specific to nor could it have such a category. In its absence the only aspect that can be thought of is the regional or local influence in the writer of his or her specific region that he skilfully presents as local specific. As we have Narayan's Malgudi that is the south Indian semi-urban local or Raja Rao's Karnataki village life.

Use of pennames by Gujarati writers is distinct as against the Indian English writers. It is a trend quite usual even in case of short story worldwide. The adoption of a penname is common in case of poets but the same was in fashion to an extent that well known poets as Sundaram and Umashankar whose pennames are almost forgotten had done it to hide their identity at attempting the 'shorter' form initially.

When we look at the socio-political and cultural depiction in pre-Independence Gujarati and Indian English short stories we note that the social, economical and cultural aspects are the larger concerns of the writers. The period after Gandhi's return from South Africa is historically a period of political movements that swept the lengths and breaths of the subcontinent. The early short stories were largely social in context with the influence of the century-long reforms at the backdrop and western influence. No writer has directly projected the anti-colonial political unrest or nationalistic spirit that the people were charged with. Though the Gandhian influence is evident, in humanitarian aspects that draws on the common man as well as social ills as untouchability. The socio-political influence of progressive movement is evident and overlapping with the Gandhian influence all through the last two decades before the Independence. The rural bias against the urban developments is a common feature of the earlier works. The concern from social to individual is also evident when it comes to fore resulting in the psychological and Freudian influence evident in the stories of Dwiref, Umashankar, Khatri and many others during forties.

The present comparative study of pre-Independence Gujarati and Indian English short story in its developments as a genre and other contextual aspects as

social, economical, political, cultural, and literary is too wide enough for major and collaborative research projects. Considering the time span of half a century and the form such as short story much can be researched through archival study of periodicals, magazines, and collections which have largely been neglected either due to its literary value or the writer's recognition. The study was an opportunity to read so many works by a range of writers from the origin to the fifties and ahead. The very form that is marginalised has in nature the scope and the potential for scholars to pursue a comparative study that the Indian literature naturally offers.



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